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FOUR LECTURES

ON THE

Evidences of Christianity,

DELIVERED IN SOUTHWARK, 1834.

By J. J. GURNEY, Esq.

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# FOUR LECTURES

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## INTRODUCTION.

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*In presenting to the public the following Lectures, the editor deems it incumbent upon him, in justice to the gentleman who delivered them, to make a few explanatory observations respecting their publication; and to account for any errors which may be detected by the literary reader, it may, perhaps, only be necessary to mention that they are printed from the notes of the short-hand writer who took them down at the time of their delivery.*

*Much indeed it is to be regretted, and by no one more than the editor, that they have not made their appearance with the sanction and revision of the learned author; at the same time it cannot fail to strike the intelligent reader, that, considering their extemporaneous character, these lectures, upon subjects which embrace so wide and multifarious a range of observation, both literary and scientific, amply vindicate Mr. Gurney's reputation as an eminent biblical critic; and though his correction while passing through the press would have prevented many little defects that*



now exist in the work ; it is not improbable that, from his appreciation of the importance of the subject, they would have been deprived of much of their present features as oral discourses.

Should it be urged by any that their publication is needless, as so many learned and valuable works connected with biblical literature have been prepared for the press, the editor would reply, and believes that the experience of most of his readers will concur with him, that the mind which may feel incapable or indisposed to grapple with the arguments of a studied treatise, will pleasantly listen to the easy, unlaboured eloquence of a viva voce lecture. And the unmingled satisfaction expressed by those who heard these lectures, the editor hopes will prove a sufficient apology for this endeavour to extend their benefit to that very large portion of the Society, and the public in general who had not that advantage. Their simple and single aim seems to be to point out and to prove, how irresistible is the authority, how matchless the beauty, and how adapted to the condition of man is the revelation of the Holy Scriptures. And if they conduce, in however trifling a degree, to this great end, the editor cannot but believe that their esteemed author, however he may have disliked their unauthorized circulation, will be among the first to rejoice at the results.

*First Lecture.*  
ON THE  
GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.

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I SHOULD like my young friends to figure to themselves, the case of a person who is entirely unacquainted with the christian religion, but who, nevertheless, is competent to inquire into those circumstances, and those historical facts, which prove its truth. I should like them to suppose, that such a person is provided with a copy of the New Testament; and that he should take the opportunity of giving it a careful perusal. It is quite impossible that a person so circumstanced should fail to be extremely struck with the contents of the volume. He would find throughout the volume, that air of simplicity, that naturalness, and that remarkable moral and spiritual weight, which would at once afford the truth to him, that it is a book of no common order; nor could he fail

to be peculiarly struck by the account contained in that volume, of the wondrous person, whose life, and death, and resurrection, and doctrine, it so clearly describes :—a person claiming the divine character, and, at the same time, shewing forth all human perfections ; and, supposing him to be a candid inquirer after truth, there are two questions, which would immediately arise with him, respecting this extraordinary book—a book, which the whole compass of his literary researches would afford him no parallel to ; nothing at all comparable to it in point of weight, beauty, power, and moral cogency ! he would ask himself, in the first place, Is this book genuine ? and, in the next place, Is this book authentic ?

I wish my young friends to remark the distinction, between *genuineness* and *authenticity* ; it is of importance, in all inquiries of the present kind. When we say that a book is genuine, we mean that it is no forgery, that it was truly written by the persons whose names it bears, and in the age in which it professes to have been produced. When we say that a book is authentic, we mean by that—that the contents of it are true ; that the history which it

contains, and the circumstances which it relates, are truly described, and have really happened.

Now, before we inquire into the authenticity of a book, and into the truth of the history which it relates, the question of its genuineness arises in the first instance, and must be disposed of before we go further. Now it so happens, that the genuineness of the books of which the New Testament is composed, has been the subject of more critical and more literary inquiry, and of a clearer and more elaborate investigation, than any books which have ever been written ; and the result of that investigation is, indeed, most satisfactory. He would be esteemed a fool, or at least entirely ignorant, in the critical world, and amongst those who are accustomed to scholastic literature, who would dare, for a moment, to dispute the genuineness of the New Testament. The plain fact is, that we are in possession of evidence of its genuineness, unspeakably superior to that of any other ancient book whatever, unless, indeed, it be the Old Testament, of which I shall soon afterwards speak.

I do not know whether my young friends are acquainted with the method which is

usually adopted by critics, in order to prove the genuineness of any ancient book. There are various criterions by which it is effected—there are external, and there are internal evidences ; in the first place comes the question, Has this book been quoted by writers, who have lived in subsequent ages ; is it recognised by persons who wrote on the same subject, as the ground of, what we may now call, their science ? Now we find, and we all know, that there is no book so largely quoted in the present day, by speakers and by writers, on any subject connected with religion, as the New Testament ; and thousands and tens of thousands of volumes might now be produced, without the smallest difficulty, all of which would be found teeming with quotations from the New Testament ; but the strength of our cause lies here, that the quotations which are made from the New Testament, present to us a series, which begins in the first century of the church of Christ, and of which the only termination is to be found in the present day. It is not that the New Testament is largely quoted *now*, it is, that it was largely quoted 1,600 years ago, and quoted even to a considerable extent,



within a few years after the book was written. When the New Testament was composed—the four Gospels by the four Evangelists, and the Epistles by the Apostles whose names they bear; the book of Revelation by the apostle John, and the book of Acts, by Luke, the companion of Paul; the manuscripts—which contained the writings, were circulated by degrees; and they were written in the language which then pervaded the civilized world, to a far greater extent than any other language.

You may ask how persons, who were accustomed, generally, to speak the Hebrew and Syrian languages, which was the case with most of the Apostles and Evangelists, should write in Greek; and the answer is—that the Greek was the pervasive language of the day, and was understood both by Jews and Gentiles, to a very large extent; all their manuscripts, therefore, soon obtained a wide circulation: and we find quotations from different parts of the New Testament, even in the first century. Barnabas wrote an Epistle, which is not included in the canon of scripture, and does not bear the marks of scripture, but which is traced by the writers of the first century; this con-

tains some writings of the New Testament. Clement of Rome, lived nearly at the close of the first century ; he was, in fact, contemporary with the apostle Paul, who mentions him, and we have some of his genuine productions in our hands ; he wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, and, in this epistle, he makes large quotations and plain references from the Epistle which Paul had written to the same church : he says, "Take in your hands the Epistle of the Apostle Paul." That they could never have done, if the Epistle of Paul had not existed ; and then he goes on to quote the words of Paul : what can be more satisfactory, what can more plainly prove the genuineness of Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians ? But I should like any man to compare with the Epistle to the Corinthians all the other Epistles of Paul, and he will find that they are all written in the same style ; in the same inimitable mode of thought and composition ; in the same peculiar form ; and no one can for a moment doubt, that if the Epistle to the Corinthians is genuine, all the other Epistles are genuine also ; they all come from the same mind, and from the same pen.

Now it is an interesting circumstance, that Clement of Rome, quoted very largely from the Epistle to the Hebrews, and as this epistle is anonymous, it is a matter of considerable importance, that we are in possession of a most undoubted evidence, in Clement's writings, of the existence of that important part of scripture, in the apostolic age. About the time that Clement lived at Rome, Ignatius and Polycarp lived in Asia, and they also quoted from the Gospels and Epistles, Ignatius particularly. We then go on a little further, and we come to a very important person, Justin Martyr, who lived in the year 147, and he wrote a controversy with the Jews, on the subject of the christian religion : his works are in our hands ; he also wrote an Apology for Christianity, addressed to the Roman Emperor ; and in his books we find quotations, of a most clear and explicit nature : and very numerous, both from the Gospels and Epistles. About the year 170, a man of the name of Tatian, published a Harmony of the Gospels. Now, of course he could not have compared the Gospels together, and put them all into one concentrated form, if they had not existed,



and been widely circulated during his life. Soon afterwards we come to Clemens of Alexandria, and Tertullian ; one in Egypt and the other at Carthage, or in the neighbourhood of Carthage ; and I venture to say, that there are more quotations in the writings of Tertullian alone, from the New Testament, than there are from the works of Cicero, in all the authors who have lived since Cicero, who have taken any notice of him ; in fact, the New Testament is infused into the writings of Tertullian ; and if any one of you would take the trouble of collecting the quotations from the New Testament you would have almost all the New Testament itself ; and almost the same observation applies to Clemens of Alexandria ; and while they were flourishing, a great luminary appeared in the person of Irenæus, who lived about the year 170, and he wrote a book against the heretics of the day, and, in order to prove that those heretics had taken a false ground, he refutes all their opinions from passages of the New Testament ; his works are also in our hands.

Thus we go forward to Origen: Origen was a man of a very extraordinary character, a

Platonic philosopher probably, converted to christianity ; he lived in Lesser Asia ; a man of prodigious learning, his works are very voluminous ; they are now in our hands, and it is a most satisfactory circumstance, that the works of Origen teem with quotations from the Gospels and Epistles, and, in fact, from every part both of the Old and New Testaments ; and what is worthy of remark is, that the person against whom he wrote, whose name was Celsus, a bitter enemy to christianity, freely admits, that those writings from which Origen quotes, were the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists. Now there are few things more satisfactory, than the plain testimony of an enemy ; we know that there is no partiality in our favor here. A bitter enemy to christianity, could say nothing against the genuineness of the book, so early as the third century : we may rest assured, that nothing ever could be said, or ever can be said in future, against its genuineness. After the time of Origen, authors multiply on us in every direction ; the writings of the ancient Fathers are very voluminous, and it would be quite in vain to go over the list of them ; they are

filled with quotations from the New Testament, just in the same way as the works of modern theologians; but it is worthy of remark, that it is not merely quotations from the sacred volumes, many of them wrote commentaries on it; and they could not write commentaries on a book that did not exist. And what is still more important, others engaged themselves in producing versions of this book into other languages, and some of the versions of the New Testament are of a very early date: probably, one of the very best versions of the New Testament, is the Syriac Peschito; and this is traced, by the learned, to the first century. It is a most beautiful and literal version of the book; it certainly is not of a later date than the second century. During the first and second centuries, the old Latin version was written; and modern investigation has brought to light another version, of a very curious kind, in the language of Upper Egypt, also supposed to be written in the second century.

Now do not you perceive, what amazingly strong evidence we have of the genuineness of the volume, in those distinct quotations from it, made in the first and second centuries. In

subsequent centuries, these versions were very much increased and multiplied. So that we have a long, unbroken line of quotations ; we have commentaries, we have harmonies, we have versions ; we have, in fact, a flood of critical light, bearing externally on this subject ; and no man, who is in the least degree acquainted with this kind of investigation, can entertain the smallest doubt of the genuineness of the New Testament. However, I wish particularly to mention a very great man, who arose in the fourth century ; his name was Eusebius ; he lived at Cesarea, in Syria : he was a man of prodigious learning, and wrote a history of the church , he was extremely fond of critical pursuits. About the time when Eusebius lived, about the year 315 after Christ, the book of the New Testament was very largely circulated in the hands of friends and enemies ; they were distributed in Asia, Africa, and Europe ; in short in every part of the Roman Empire. They were read by persons of every persuasion. Christianity was at that time making a rapid way through the whole boundaries of the Roman Empire, and soon became the established religion of the Roman Empire,—within

ten years of the time of Eusebius ; and at that time Eusebius, the very prince of critics, one of the most deliberate, and learned of all inquirers who have ever lived, in reference to this subject, thus says, in speaking of the books of the New Testament, that “ the four Gospels, the book of Acts, the Epistles of Paul, the First Epistle of Peter, and the First of John, were, at that time, universally allowed to be a genuine production, in short, by far the greater part of the whole volume ;” and, notwithstanding the great extent to which it was circulated, there was but one unanimous feeling—a sentiment among both friends and enemies ; his expressions are, “ That they are universally confessed to be genuine ;” and then he mentions, (and it shews the precision with which he inquired into the subject, and that he took nothing on trust,) he mentions there were some persons who had raised doubts, respecting the Second and Third Epistles of John, the books of Revelation, of Peter, and James ; but he gives plain evidence that those are also genuine. And in the year 365, there was a general conclave of the Bishops of the christian church, held at Lao-



dicea, where they finally inquired into that subject, and came to a unanimous decision, that the whole canon of the New Testament, as we now receive it, was a genuine canon ; and every part of it was proved to be a genuine canon ; and at the same time (and it shews the precision with which they inquired,) rejecting a variety of spurious Gospels ; for there were circulated spurious imitations of the true Gospels, and of the Epistles of Paul :—and I should like very much for my young friends, who wish to go into the subject, to compare the genuine Gospels and Epistles, with those spurious imitations, if they can be called imitations, which imitate only by a kind of mockery. You cannot read a single page of the New Testament without feeling, in your own minds, a certainty and a conviction, that you cannot get rid of, that what you read is genuine. You cannot read a single page of the spurious productions, without being immediately satisfied that they *are* spurious ; the whole tenor and manner of them are totally different ; in point of fact, all those spurious productions were soon banished from the church, and are now forgotten and never

heard of ; but they are still in the hands of literary men, and prove their own falsity by their internal weakness.

Now these external evidences which are so numerous, so harmonious, and so strong, far beyond those which are brought to bear on any other ancient book in the world, are supported by internal evidences of the most precise and definite character ; and first of these, (and I appeal to the memories of my young friends as I go on—I hope you will write down these things on the tablet of your memory ; they are worth remembering, all these circumstances ;) the main internal evidence of the genuineness of the New Testament, is the language in which it is written. That language as I told you before was Greek ; but it was Greek of a peculiar kind ; it was Greek replete with Hebrew idioms. With the single exception of the works of Luke, who was himself a Grecian, the whole of the New Testament is written in Hebrew-Greek ; the language which a Jew could write, and only a Jew. You know that after the first century, there were no Jewish christians, or scarcely any at all,—none that we know of ; and

the Fathers of the Greek church, who wrote in common Greek, were no more capable of writing the Greek of the New Testament, than you would be of writing any language quite foreign to you. It is quite certain that there were no other christians capable of writing the language in which the New Testament is written, except during the apostolic age itself ; and here is a broad internal evidence of the most important character : but again, there was nothing by which a spurious book was so well detected, as by its anachronisms, that is to say, by its containing an account of circumstances which are proved, by subsequent and collateral investigation, not to have happened at the time of that history, to which the book professes to relate ; and these spurious Gospels are all of them disproved by the most absurd anachronisms respecting their chronology. But the New Testament, although it has been in the hands of investigators for so many ages, is not found to contain a single absurdity, or anachronism of this description.

The history of the New Testament tallies in all its points with the profane history of



the time ; and the accounts which it contains, of the manners of the Jews, of the customs of the Romans, of the Roman governors, of the Roman laws, and of a variety of other particulars, since then proved, are all found to coincide, with the most beautiful precision, with the accounts that we find respecting the Jews in the works of Josephus, in the first century ; and with accounts which we find of the history and manners of the Romans, in their own authors. What can account for this harmony ? Nothing can but the genuineness of the book. Now judge as a specimen, and here is a point which bears both upon its genuineness and upon its authenticity or truth ; you are aware how many individuals are mentioned in the New Testament, attaching to the family of Herod. I will venture to say, that there was no family, whose actions are recorded in ancient history, so intricate as the family of Herod, or scarcely any ; a variety of individuals, under peculiar circumstances, bearing the name of Herod, and therefore very great confusion in their history ; Herod the Great ; Herod Archelaus, and his brethren ; and Herod Agrippa ; and several others—and their history is interwoven

in a very peculiar manner, and it is exceedingly difficult to pick out, though it may be from the works of Josephus. Now all these Herods are named in the New Testament, and in a very natural manner; and we find, when we compare it side by side with the information respecting the Herod family, contained in Josephus, that the two perfectly tally together; and nothing can account for the fact but the truth of both histories.

So much for the genuineness of the New Testament; and it is really delightful to be able to say, that there is no ancient book existing in any language, of which the genuineness is so largely and so satisfactorily demonstrated as that of the Gospels and Epistles, and every part of the New Testament.

But then we come to the question of its *authenticity*. I will suppose that the inquirer after truth, having investigated the subject with a critical eye, is fully satisfied in his own mind, that the book is genuine:—he says, “Well, but is the book true?” Why, the very fact that the book itself is genuine, and written by the persons whose names it bears, affords a strong *prima facie* evidence that the

book is true. We have proved the genuineness of the works of Livy, Cicero, and Tacitus; we do not think of disputing the truth of their histories; we take it for granted in the common order of things, that Livy, and Cicero, and Tacitus, were men of respectability and truth, (as they certainly were,) and therefore, without any further inquiry, we receive their works as true without the smallest difficulty, (and the same with respect to Xenophon, Thucydides, and all the ancient historians,) and entertain no difficulty on the subject; but there is one ground on which the authenticity or truth of the history contained in the New Testament, demands a more close and precise investigation; namely,—as you know so many parts of that history are miraculous, and therefore an inquirer into truth (such as I suppose on the present occasion,) might fairly demand an extraordinary amount of evidence, to prove the authenticity of the New Testament.

Now with that extraordinary amount of evidence, we are perfectly prepared to furnish him; and I would just say, that this is ground which has been travelled over by the profoundest and most enlightened reasoners that

ever lived ; and in a very especial manner by Bacon, Locke, and Newton : and those men, who were not likely to be deceived by a mere shadow, and semblance of truth, were all of them entirely satisfied of the truth of the New Testament. In point of fact there is a great body of evidence on the subject, and no man who goes into it with an impartial mind, can fail to arise from the investigation with that mind entirely satisfied of the truth of the gospel history. In the first place he will observe the confirmation of the truth of that history which is contained in the writings of an historian who had no connection with christians ; this is a very interesting line of enquiry. The works of Josephus afford a great deal of evidence of this description. I have just alluded to the whole history of the Herod family ; how admirably it may be made out by comparing it with the history of Josephus, and so with many other particulars mentioned : the names of the governors ; of the high priests ; and so on, are clearly related by Josephus. Among the Roman historians we have evidence of a precise and very interesting character, and especially in the writ-

ings of Tacitus ; he tells us an extraordinary story ; he was writing the life of Nero, who lived in the year 64, after Christ, and he tells us that Nero, amidst his mad and wicked actions, set the city of Rome on fire for his amusement, and then in order to save himself from the reproach and obloquy which this action occasioned, he ascribed the burning of Rome to the poor christians, of whom he tells us there were large numbers at Rome ; and I imagine it could not be that many of the christians were at that time at Rome, unless the history of Christ be true ;—he goes on however to tell us that the Christians derive their name from one Christ, who was put to death by Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, in the reign of the Emperor Tiberius ; and since that his religion had spread in various parts of the Roman empire : so that the account of the life of Christ, the death of Christ, the precise date when our Saviour lived, the name of the Roman governor by whom he was put to death, the name of the Emperor who lived in that time, and the early spread of his religion, are all related by that authentic historian, Tacitus ! There is a small testimony in the works of



Suetonius, and another in Lucian ; but I know of no Roman writer who affords a more interesting and delightful light on this subject than Pliny the younger, who lived in the time of the Emperor Trajan, about the year 100 : his letter to Trajan respecting the christians was in the year 107 ; he was governor of the province of Bythinia, in Lesser Asia ; he was a man of letters and good intelligence ; he appears to have been a man of some feeling too, and his letters are distinguished by a peculiar elegance ; he was employed by the Emperor Trajan, who was by no means one of the worst of the emperors, in the wretched work of persecuting the christians ; (for it appears that this Emperor, like some of his predecessors, and some of his successors, was set on exterminating the race of christians) he writes a letter to the Emperor complaining of the difficulty of the task, and begging for further instructions ; he says that this depraved superstition, as he is pleased to call it, has spread on every side ; that there was no possibility of stopping it ; that it was not only to be found in the towns, but even in little villages and country places ; that the temples of the

Gods were so entirely forsaken that there was found no market for victims, and in fact the whole country was seized as it were by that christian religion ; and he tells us further that really upon inquiry he could find no fault with the people, for they committed no offence against the government, and the only plea on which he could satisfy himself that they were worthy of death was this, that they were so exceedingly obstinate, that nothing in the world could induce them to renounce their faith ; but as for their conduct and actions they were a quiet and innocent people, and were accustomed to meet on a stated day every week before day-light and then to worship God together, and to sing hymns to Christ as to God, (these are his words,) and further that they would bind themselves by a solemn obligation ; *not* to rebel against the empire ; not to pull down the established order of things in a civil point of view ; not to rob their neighbours, or to injure any man, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God, describing in his own language several plain christian virtues, and especially those of temperance and charity—that is their character ;

and then he says they used to meet again for a social meal in the course of the day: that was all he could say of them, and he begged to know whether the Emperor would require him to go on with his persecution. Now do not you perceive what an amazing deal of evidence there is here? You have in the first place a proof of the character, and in the next, a proof of the numbers and prevalence of christians; and when you consider that, in embracing christianity, they embraced the furnace, the fagot, the sword, the torment, and the stake; when you consider that in embracing christianity they renounced their families, their homes, their fortune, and their friends; when you consider that in embracing christianity, they gave up all their old habits,—the habits of the Jews and Gentiles, inveterate as they were, and adopted a set of habits which were naturally foreign to their minds and education.—I say when you take all this into view, and look at their numbers and prevalence all over the country, I think we must all agree that this could not possibly have been the case if the history contained in the New Testament had not been a true history. So much for



written testimonies ; now for the testimony of the Apostles themselves.

What a very great charm it gives to a book, and what very great reliance we have on the authenticity of a book when the history which it contains is written by an eye and ear witness ; what a peculiar authenticity attaches for instance to Bishop Burnet's history of his own times, and Lord Clarendon's history : probably some of my young friends have read those books ; I venture to say it is impossible for any one man to read one of those books written by an eye witness of the scenes they describe, without feeling an innate conviction, that what he reads is true. We like to hear things from an eye or an ear witness, especially when they have the reputation of being honest men. Now Matthew and John are eye witnesses, and if any one will take the Gospel of Matthew, and take the Gospel of John, and observe how they are interwoven one with another, and how completely harmonious the history of the two Gospels are, when put together, he will find here the testimony of two eye and ear witnesses which will afford the most satisfactory evidence to the human mind. You

remember the beginning of John's Epistle ; he says " What we have seen with our eyes, " what we have heard with our ears, what our " hands have handled of the word of life, these " things we declare unto you,"—and although Mark and Luke do not stand as eye and ear witnesses themselves in their Gospels, Luke was the companion of Paul the Apostle, and Mark the favorite companion of Peter ; and therefore they had their history from those who were intimately versed in all the scenes which they described ; and in the case of Mark, from one of the most favored of our Lord's Apostles during his life ! But take the book of Acts, and there you have again an eye and an ear witness, Luke describing all he saw in the course of his own travels with the Apostle Paul. The next point is to take these four Gospels and observe their harmony ; taking more particularly Matthew and John, the two Gospels of two eye witnesses, you will find a perfect harmony between those two Gospels, and yet there is that apparent diversity about some little matters which proves that they were independent witnesses. Let us suppose we were in a court of justice, and that the wit-

nesses were brought forwards one after another; the first thing a jury would look at, would be the independence of the witnesses, and you will find them looking at some little points in a different point of view, and stating them in a different manner—it would be a most satisfactory circumstance that such a variety should prove the independence of the witnesses; and just such a variety is to be found in the four Gospels; and if any one would make a point of examining the little circumstances on which they seem to differ from one another, and on which their agreement could be proved, they would all agree; but one man sees one angel, and another two, and so on. Here is a plain and unquestionable proof of their independence, and therefore when you take the four independent writers, writers proved to be independent by their variety, and then find that they are all in close, substantial harmony, and that they interweave one one with another in the most beautiful and natural manner, you have a proof of the truth of their history which no man can shake.

Now of the kind of coincidence which I mean, I would just give you a specimen:

Matthew, in describing the sufferings of our Lord in the garden of Gethsemane, describes our Lord's words on prayer when he says; "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," and again, "if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done." Turn to John and you will find no account of this part of the scene, but when the officers of the High Priest are described by John as coming to surprise him in the garden, and when Peter drew his sword and cut off the ear of Malchus; what are the words of Jesus, "Put thy sword in thy sheath, the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it." Now do not you perceive how exactly the narrative of John coincides with the account given by Matthew, so that the idea of the cup he was to drink, was still dwelling in the mind of our Saviour, and here the truth comes out in all its simplicity and beauty. A vast variety of these instances might easily be mentioned; they are peculiarly striking when we compare the book of Acts with the Epistles of Paul; the book of Acts describes the acts of Paul; the Epistles contain his writings, and I will venture to say that no man can compare the acts

of Paul with the Epistles of Paul, deliberately and carefully, without being plainly convinced that the Epistles are genuine, and the Acts true. The coincidences to which I allude are not of a striking nature ; not of a marked, conspicuous character ; they are oblique ; they are incidental ; they arise, as it were, by accident ; for example, you find in the Book of Acts an account of Paul and Barnabas going out together on a journey and falling out by the way ; and why did they fall out, because Barnabas wanted to take Mark with him who had deserted them on a former occasion, and Paul did not think it right ; we do not know why that happened ; but turn to one of the Epistles of Paul, and you will find it stated of Mark, that he was sister's son to Barnabas, so that Mark was Barnabas's own nephew. Here is the truth glimmering out, as it were, and no man can doubt that to be true : you may recollect what he says about Timothy in the Acts, that he was well reported of, and he had a Jewish mother and a Greek father ; that is recorded : and a good deal is said about his submission to the Jewish ceremonies ; turn to the epistle to Timothy ; there is no direct mention of his



having a Greek father and Jewish mother, but the apostle in an incidental, oblique, truth-like manner, speaks of the unfeigned faith which dwelt first his mother Eunice, and his grandmother Lois ; what faith ? faith in the religion of the Old Testament, therefore they were Jews, and further he says, " From a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures." How came he to know them from a child ? because his mother did her duty and taught him the Scriptures : so here I say there is an oblique coincidence, and nothing can account for it but the truth and genuineness of the books. I was once conversing with a very eminent person, the present Lord Chancellor,\* on this subject (who we must all allow to be a good judge of evidence) and I was very glad to hear him say in a very large circle of company, that Paley's *Horæ Paulinæ* was perfect evidence. Now that is a comparison between the Book of Acts and the Epistles of Paul ; and I was really rejoiced to hear a man who has sometimes I believe been accused of doubts on the subject, plainly declare in the face of a large party that it was a book of evidence. Well, if that is

\* Lord Brougham.

perfect evidence, Christianity is true, and there is an end to the whole question, for if the book of Acts is true, the whole is true, for the miraculous part of the Book of Acts is sufficient to prove the divine origin of our holy religion.

Well, I now wish to bring to view certain coincidences between the contents of the New Testament and profane authors, of the same oblique character, and therefore the more indicative of truth, and also of certain circumstances which have lately arisen, which develop the truth of the New Testament. In the 17th chapter of Acts, where Paul visits Athens, he finds altars "to the unknown God,"—a very remarkable circumstance; and then he addresses them in the Areopagus on the plain of Mars, (which was the place where they met for the purposes of justice) and says "The God whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." Now there is an ancient great author of the name of Philostratus who describes certain circumstances which happened in the city of Athens, about 300 years before Christ I believe; a great plague arose in the city, and the inhabitants were exposed to the greatest possible difficulties; at last the plague

was stayed, and (says the history) Epimenes caused altars to be raised in different parts of Athens in honor of the unknown Deity, by whom the plague was stayed. What a beautiful though wondrous circumstance; how satisfactory! who that was forging a history would think of mentioning an enemy's authors? but it is mentioned in the Book of Acts, and that with a sort of candour for which nothing but truth can account. Well but, you may say, this evidence applies in a particular manner to those parts of the history which are not miraculous. Now many of them do; there was nothing miraculous about Timothy, nor in those altars, any thing miraculous; but if you read the New Testament you will find the miraculous parts in every portion of it interwoven so naturally, interwoven so entirely among it, yet clearly, that you cannot sever them, and taking the ground-work as true, you cannot get rid of the truth of the other part of it. You find the whole goes together, and must go together: in proving the truth of the history, you prove the truth of the miracles as well as all things else: but it so happens that even here is subsequent evidence bearing on the



specific point, bearing specifically on the miraculous portion, that the miraculous part of the history is true. Now Celsus, that bitter enemy to christianity, not only allows in his writings (which Origen quotes from) that the New Testament was written by its supposed authors, but he clearly acknowledges that the miraculous parts really took place; there is an acknowledged evidence, the evidence of an enemy, of an enemy of such a comprehensive mind: he says he acknowledges the miracles were true, and he gets out of his scrape by pretending that they were caused by magic. In the same way the Jewish enemies of christianity bore testimony to the truth of the christian miracles! I suppose you have all heard of the Talmud,—a very curious book written by Jewish doctors in the second and third centuries, and some part of it earlier; it has two parts, the Mishna, which contains all the Jewish traditions, and the Gemara, which is a Commentary; and the whole is a very voluminous work in Talmudic Hebrew, very difficult to read. Well, in this Talmud there is an attack on christianity, and those Jewish Doctors acknowledge that the miracles

of Jesus Christ were true miracles, and they get rid of the difficulty just as their forefathers did, by ascribing those miracles to Beelzebub. That you know is a poor method, for a house divided against itself cannot stand; still there is the evidence of the enemy, of the truth of the miracles. Then again there is a very curious evidence in the works of Justin Martyr; he wrote a public apology for christianity, addressed to the Roman Emperor, Antoninus Pius, and in this apology, a public production, addressed to the highest magistrate of the state, he makes his appeal to certain records which were in the hands of the Emperor, and were in the archives of Rome, in which records were the acts of Pontius Pilate. Now it was known to be the practice of Roman governors of that day, to send home a journal of all the particular events, which have been called the "acts of Pontius Pilate," or of any other. "Well," says he, "examine the acts of Pilate, I know that they are in your hands, I know they are in the archives of the Roman Emperor, and there you will find a precise account of the miracles and resurrection of Jesus Christ." Now can any man suppose

that Justin Martyr, who was a great philosopher, and a wise man, would be so foolish as to append the whole weight of his argument on a point which the Emperor could have refuted in a moment, if it had not been true? there can be no question that those acts actually existed; that they were in the archives of the Roman empire, and did contain an account of our Saviour and his resurrection. So that we have abundant evidence afforded us by the enemies of the truth, and no evidence better?

But now let us take the evidence of friends of truth; not only the four writers of the Gospels, but all the Apostles were witnesses of the miracles and resurrection of Jesus Christ; and they went forth in every part of the civilized world, and even beyond its limits, as witnesses, not merely of certain doctrines, but of certain facts on which those doctrines were built. Now I think we have abundant evidence that these men—these twelve men, taking Matthias instead of Judas, could not by any possibility be deceived about the miracles in the first place; and then I will shew you that they could not be deceivers, and you will

judge what the alternative must be. That they could not be deceived you may judge from this circumstance, that these men were slow of heart to believe the things they did see, remarkable for their incredulity, as they state respecting themselves, acknowledging their own weakness ; men very cautious in the reception of facts, which is evident in their history ; and in the next place, what were the facts ? they were facts to which they were all witnesses. Could they by any possibility be deceived when, for instance, the leper covered with a loathsome and incurable disease from head to foot, cast himself prostrate on the ground before Jesus, in presence of his disciples ? “ If thou wilt thou canst make me clean ? ” “ I will, be thou clean,” and immediately his leprosy was cleansed. Could any man be deceived in this fact ? an eye witness, a deliberate eye witness could not be deceived about that. Was it evidence to be mistaken for a moment, when Lazarus had been lying in his grave four days, beginning to putrify ; when a whole company surrounded the grave ; when the apostles were all about our Saviour, when the grave was opened, when the language

went forth "Lazarus come forth," and immediately he that was dead came forth bound hand and foot, and gave thanks? Here was a fact in which no eye witness could possibly be deceived. But take the main fact to which they bear testimony, and look at it for a short time; the resurrection of our Lord himself. I will venture to say, that there is no fact recorded in ancient history, of which we are in possession of such satisfactory evidence, as the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ: his death, you know, is not only recorded by the Evangelists but by the Roman historians as I have mentioned, and also by Josephus, as he has done his resurrection in one passage, which we have every reason to consider genuine. Now just call to mind the extreme publicity of the death of our Lord Jesus Christ; remember the reputation that he had obtained among all the people; remember the mighty multitudes who followed after him into the wilderness; think of the amazing effect which his doctrine, and all the miracles must have produced on the minds of the people in general; then remember that he was betrayed into the hands of his enemies; that he was crucified on



Mount Calvary ; that the circumstance was of the most notorious description : and when did it take place ? During the feast of the Passover, when thousands and tens of thousands of Jews from every part of the country were assembled at Jerusalem ; and at what time of day ? At noon day,—for three noon-day hours, from twelve to three he remained on the cross, two notorious criminals being crucified at the same time. Now we are all perfectly well aware, even in this country, of the publicity of these scenes, and of the vast multitudes of people thronging to witness them ; and we have no doubt that all Jerusalem, as we may say, was poured out to witness the public death of our Lord. No event ever was more public ;—no event was ever more marked than the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross ; and it is a very remarkable circumstance, that there was also a peculiar investigation into this subject as it happened in the order of Providence ; you know the day that was to come next was a high sabbath, and the Jews were anxious that the legs of the criminals, as they called them, should be broken, that their death should be accomplished, and their bodies be removed



before the coming in of the Sabbath : Pilate sends his soldiers for the purpose, and when they come, and examine Jesus, they brake not his legs,—and why ? For he was dead already. They came and examined him, and found him dead ; and then, with a sort of wanton barbarity, they plunged a spear into his side, and there came thereout blood and water ; and therefore we may rest assured, that even if death had not taken place, death must have taken place after the infliction of that additional wound. So that there is the most precise and marked evidence of the fact. Well, he is committed to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea ; the seal of the Roman governor is placed on the tomb ; the soldiers of the Roman government are posted as watchers ; at the appointed hour the seal is broken ; the watchers are scattered ; the stone is removed : the Lord is risen : the angel in white (or two angels) is found sitting in the sepulchre ; he appears first to Mary and converses with her ; then to Peter ; then to the two disciples, as they were going to Emmaus ; that same evening, being the first day of the week, to the ten Apostles (Thomas Didymus not being there) ;

on the following week to all the Apostles, including Didymus; then, as Paul testifies in the 15th Chapter of the 1st Corinthians, to five hundred brethren at once: and all those persons were witnesses of our Lord's resurrection. And he was subject to close personal examination; that doubter Thomas,—that man who would not believe unless he saw with his own eyes, who would not believe unless he saw the wounds; the print of the nails in his hands and feet, and his wound in his side—our Saviour shewed him his hands, his finger was put into the prints of the nails, his hand was put into the side of our wounded Saviour; he was personally examined,—and I will say that, without this examination, with all those facts before them, the Apostles could not possibly be deceived as to that fact: it is morally impossible: even if one man could by any strong delusion of vision have been deceived in so ostensible and obvious a fact as this, that twelve men could by any possibility be deceived?

Whether then we take our Saviour's resurrection, or the principal miracles which he wrought on other occasions; when we con

sider the character of the Apostles in the first place, and the nature of the miracles in the second place, I think that we must all come to this conclusion, that it is absolutely impossible that the disciples could be deceived by them. Now could they be deceivers?—though they were not deceived themselves, could they deceive others? What proof have we that they could not be deceivers? In the first place examine the internal gospel history; the remarkable candour which they display in telling their own faults, and the humiliating circumstances which they give; how plainly they tell them all: and in the second place, their doctrine is the subject of truth—there were never persons who bore so high an esteem for truth as the Evangelists and Apostles; truth was their motto, their joy, their strength; and they tell us that all liars have their part in the lake of fire and brimstone: but while that is their doctrine, while their master is called the Truth, by way of eminence; while truth is the main character in their view of it, the whole view of their heaven; we task their veracity by their conduct; those men sacrificed their property, their families, their leisure,

their privileges, their habits, and finally their lives; for what purpose? That they might bear testimony to those facts they saw. I will say that there is no impossibility in natural philosophy greater than the moral impossibility, that twelve men of established character, for veracity and for good conduct; that twelve men of such a character, and such a profession, should sacrifice all they held dear in life for the purpose of propagating that which they knew to be false. There are realities in the moral world which are just as certain and just as unquestionable as the realities in the natural world; and it is just as impossible that twelve men should give up their lives for the purpose of bearing testimony to a lie, as it is that a river should alter its course, and run upwards instead of downwards; and therefore I consider it is proved in the plainest and most unquestionable manner, that these twelve men, in bearing testimony to the miracles and resurrection of Christ, could not be deceived, and also that they could not be deceivers. What is the alternative? There is but one, namely, that the history which they related was true. And now let me advert for a

moment to the peculiar testimony of the Apostle Paul; he says, "Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time," When, and where was he seen by the Apostle Paul? Do you want one circumstance which establishes the truth of the Christian religion? You will find that circumstance in the miraculous conversion of the Apostle Paul; it is an argument beautifully developed by the late Lord Lyttleton in a work expressly written on that subject. The Apostle Paul leaves Jerusalem in the character of a fierce persecutor; a bigot in all the bigotry of the Pharisees, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel; zealous for the letter of the law; bound hand and foot by the ceremonial and Mosaic institutions; and fierce as the most cruel beasts of prey, in pursuing the unoffending Nazarenes, even unto death. In the course of his journey he is arrested in a moment, by a light and by a voice from Heaven, "Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks."—Who art thou Lord? "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." There was a divine hand on that man; he did not disobey the heavenly vision; and in the



course of one short moment, as it were, this fierce, this bigoted, this restless persecutor of the unoffending christians, was converted into the humble, obedient, believing servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. There, friends, is a miracle in itself, which abundantly establishes the truth of our religion. But further, this Apostle, like the other Apostles, was himself endued with a power of working miracles; not in his own name, not in his own strength, but in the name of the Lord Jesus;—he went with them, confirming their doctrine by signs following. Now turn to the epistles to the Corinthians, and you will discover in that epistle which we have already found to be genuine; a public document addressed to a public body. “The miracles, with the signs of an Apostle, were wrought by me, in your presence, with all mighty signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.” If he had written to the Ephesians about the miracles which he had wrought at Corinth, we might by possibility suppose that there was no evidence to the Ephesians of his having done so; that it might be possibly false; but he further goes on and tells the Corinthians about the wonders



which they themselves were enabled to perform; for it was a day of miracles, the day which established christianity in the world was marked by many coincidences with the announcing of the new doctrine. Now that the Apostle Paul, in a public document addressed to the Corinthians should make mention of the miracles which he had wrought in their presence, and of the miracles which they were enabled to work themselves, and, supposing for a moment that those things had not taken place, can you conceive a greater folly, can you conceive a circumstance which would more immediately bring upon him the rebuke of being a deceiver, and therefore wholly unworthy of credit? Taking into account that the Apostle Paul was neither a madman nor a fool, we are quite sure that those miracles were really performed, and therefore we are perfectly sure that christianity is true. Well, once more let me allude to the marvellous spread of christianity in every part of the Roman empire; that within twenty years or thirty years of the death of Christ, in the reign of Nero, there were multitudes of christians at Rome; that by the end of the first century the

whole of Lesser Asia was pervaded by them, as it were ; churches were planted on every side, in Phœnicia, Italy, Gaul, and Africa; and in the course of the fourth century, in the year 325, christianity became the established religion of the Roman Empire, recognised as the religion of the empire ; and when you remember at the same time, that the religion which was thus disseminated, was opposed to all the habits of the Jews, and to all the practices of the Gentiles, to all their prejudices, to all their systems, to all their pleasures; and for a long season exposed its advocates to innumerable sufferings, I will say that you cannot possibly account for these facts, otherwise than by the truth of the miracles and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. And now with regard to the resurrection, I have one more evidence to produce ; there is a silent testimony borne to the truth of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, by a witness which has gone on bearing its testimony for eighteen-hundred years and upwards, and bears it to the present day. What is that? Why it is the use of the first day of the week, instead of the last, for the Sabbath ; trace that to its beginning; I defy any

man living to account for it on any other ground whatever than the fact of his resurrection : you may trace it backwards from the eighteenth century, the seventeenth, the sixteenth, and so back to the first century, by the clearest records, and you trace it back in actual history, till you come to the very time when it first happened ; for the disciples were met on that evening, and our Lord then appeared again to them, and they met the same evening next week, and from that time it has gone on to the present day. Why should the sabbath day be changed? How can you account for it? What reason was there for it? There is the palpable reason, that on that day our Lord rose from the dead: you cannot trace it back any further; you bring it to that point, and there you stop; and I will say that, when you have in fact plainly the evidence of profane historians concerning the death of our Saviour ; when you have the evidence of the twelve Apostles to his resurrection, and of the five hundred brethren at once, and the Apostle Paul afterwards ; and when in addition to their evidence, which we have found to be so irresistibly true ; we have the silent, continuous,

and increasing testimony of the first day of the week; I will say that there is no fact that ever was recorded in ancient history, of which we have so strong an evidence, as the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Now friends, let us just draw a conclusion from the premises before us; you probably are most of you aware of the nature of inductive philosophy:—the philosopher examines the facts which lie before him on the surface of nature, or in the depths of nature; he examines a large number and variety of facts; he analyses them into their particular parts; he compares them one with another, and he, by an inductive process, traces them to a common principle or common cause; that cause he again traces backwards to another, until he arrives with infallible certainty at the first great cause,—God, the Author of Nature. The argument which I have now been using, enables me to trace christianity by a similar inductive process to God, the Author of nature. We have a great variety of facts before us; we trace them backwards, and backwards, until we come to the actual miracles of the New Testament; then we examine what

those miracles are, and we find they are infractions and interruptions of the uniform sequences of nature, of the most marked and definite description; not ascribable to any second cause, but actual infractions and interruptions of those sequences of nature which we know to be uniform. Nature is already traced to God; we know that the uniform sequences of natural things are by the order of his wisdom and his power; we know that no man can resist or interrupt the fiat of supreme authority, and therefore we may rest assured that actual miracles, actual interruptions and contradictions of the uniform order and sequences of nature, must be traced, like the order itself, to the author of nature, that is, to God; and if any man bring forward a doctrine, and accompany that doctrine by actual, undoubted, public, and unquestionable miracles, or infractions of the order of nature, he thereby brings along with him an evidence, which the most scrutinizing philosophy can not refuse to admit, that his doctrine comes from God. Now, however, I must make a little reserve in my argument. I think we have some reason to believe that a certain



power over the order of nature, within very prescribed limits, has on certain occasions been permitted (for reasons we cannot understand) to evil spirits, as I think was the case with the magicians of Egypt, who contended with Moses; but when you examine the christian miracles, you will find in their magnitude, their variety, their stupendous importance, their beauty, their sublimity, and in their compassionate character, abundant evidence of the origin from which they sprang; and those wonders of the Egyptian magicians will not for a moment bear the smallest consideration in comparison with them: and observe well, that there is this feature in them; they were all wrought in the support of the cause of holiness: now you know that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand, and if Satan be divided against Satan his house cannot stand; and, within the whole scope of man's argument, nothing has ever been produced, more absurd than the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, of which the Jews would speak, when they ascribed the miracles of our Lord to the power of Beelzebub. Now friends, the argument grounded



on natural philosophy enables us to trace these infractions of the sequences of nature, to God, the author of nature; and the holiness of that religion, in testimony of which, those miracles were wrought, enables us to trace the same wondrous facts to God, in his character of the moral governor of the world,—who is holy—holy—holy—the Lord God of Sabaoth—and may the whole world be filled with his glory.

**Second Lecture.**  
ON THE  
GENUINENESS AND AUTHENTICITY  
OF THE  
OLD TESTAMENT.

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THE genuineness of the books of the Old Testament is established by the same kind of critical evidence as that of the books of the New Testament. My young friends, I presume, are most of them fully aware, that as the New Testament was written in Greek, so the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. And, in the first place, I need not remind them that in the New Testament itself, there is a vast variety of quotations from the Old Testament, I may say, with very little exception, from every part of the Old Testament; and if any person would take the trouble of selecting all such quotations from various parts of the Old Testament, contained in the gospels and epistles, they would find that they would make an important volume; and it is

worthy of observation, that our Saviour and his Apostles always quote from the Old Testament as words of divine authority, so much so as to settle every question connected with morals or religion; they quote it frequently—and they quote it as Divine Scripture. Now we are quite sure that the books of the Old Testament could not be thus quoted by the Apostles, and our Saviour, and the Evangelists, had they not existed long before that period, and been generally known as the established scriptures of the Jews;—in point of fact, our Lord was pointing to the Canon of the Old Testament where he speaks of Moses, “the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms;” for those three contained the whole of the Old Testament according to the version that was customary among the Jews. The Law contained the five books of Moses; the Prophets contained, according to the Jewish classification, the whole of the historical books, and all the Prophets, as we now call them;—and the Psalms contained, not only the Psalms, but the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, and the books of Job and Esther; so that these three divisions contain the whole; and our Saviour

mentions them all as bearing testimony to himself.

But we are not confined merely to the New Testament as an evidence of this point; the works of Josephus, which are very extensive, contain voluminous extracts from the Old Testament. He lived during the apostolic age, and wrote a large work, called "The Antiquities of the Jews;" this contains what we may call the transference of the history of the Old Testament into his own pages;—besides, you have frequent quotations from Psalms and the Prophets; and not only so, but in one of his works he enumerates the books which form the canon of the Hebrew Scriptures, and gives a list of them. Besides Josephus, there was a voluminous and important Jewish writer, who lived in Egypt at the time of our Saviour, whose name was Philo; he was a Platonic Philosopher; wrote a great variety of works, and quoted extensively from almost every part of the Old Testament; and it is very remarkable that Philo the Jew, as well as Josephus, always quotes from the Old Testament as divine scripture.—We have, therefore, in the various

books of the New Testament,—in the writings of Josephus, and in those of Philo, the most abundant evidence, on the ground of quotation, of the genuineness of the Old Testament, and of the antiquity, the comparative antiquity, of that part of the sacred volume. But besides these, we are in possession of a most important document, namely, a translation which was made of the whole Hebrew Scripture, between 200 and 300 years before the christian era, into the Greek :—it was made under the care of the Ptolemies of Egypt, by learned Jews of that date, and it contains, therefore, a plain and unquestionable proof of the existence of the books of the Old Testament before that period :—and they were then translated as very ancient, and as divine books.

There is also internal evidence of the language in which the Old Testament was written. You remember that the genuineness of the New Testament was evidenced by the peculiar language in which that was written, namely, Hebrew Greek ; on the very same principle of criticism, the genuineness of the Old Testament is established by the peculiar

nature of the language, in which almost the whole of it was written, namely, pure Hebrew.

The Jews were accustomed to speak the pure Hebrew before they went into Babylon,—before the date of their captivity ; but when they returned from Babylon, about 530 years before Christ, they lost their old language, and were afterwards accustomed to speak in a language which was Hebrew in its origin, but was mixed with Chaldee, or Syriac Greek,—in short, it was really imbued with the Syriac language, and it was about as similar to the Hebrew as Italian is to Latin ; it is very evident therefore that the bulk of the Old Testament must have been written while the Jews were accustomed to speak the pure Hebrew, and we are enabled in this way to trace it backwards to a date anterior to 600 years before the coming of Christ. When the Jews settled in their own land, they formed what was called synagogue worship on their return from captivity ; and they used to meet in their synagogues on the sabbath day, for the purpose of the public worship of God ; and part of their service consisted in reading ex-



tracts from the Law of Moses, and afterwards from the Law and the Prophets together. My young friends will easily remember that this was the case when our Saviour was on earth; how frequently he went to the synagogues, and how plainly it is recorded that the Law and the Prophets were read on those occasions; and in order to make the reading intelligible to the hearers, there was a translation provided from the pure Hebrew into that Syriac, or Chaldee language which the people were now speaking. Those translations were called Targums, and the text was first read in the original Hebrew, and afterwards read in the version of the vernacular language, in order that the people might understand the reading. Now it is a very satisfactory circumstance, and adds additional weight to the evidence of which we were in possession, of the genuineness of the Old Testament, that some of those translations are now in our hands; a very ancient one of the books of the Law, written by Onkelos, and another of the books of the Prophets, written by Jonathan; and they are documents of great importance, *not only as throwing considerable light on the*

ancient Hebrew scriptures, but as affording a clear evidence of the genuineness and antiquity of those scriptures.

It appears that when the books of the Law were written they were carefully kept, first in the Tabernacle, and afterwards in the Temple ; and as the various books of history and prophecy were afterwards composed, each in their own age, they were added to the stock which was kept in the archives of the Temple ; and this was known to have been the practice of the Jews before their captivity ; after their captivity, copies were multiplied in every direction for the use of the various synagogues. I will also mention that very peculiar care had been taken of the text of the Hebrew scriptures, and even at the time when the Jews were opposing ; were doing all they could to oppose the spread of our holy religion, there was a set of Doctors risen among them, who made a great point of attending to the preservation of the text of the Hebrew scriptures. They counted all the letters of each book, made a careful examination ; and, with the greatest possible precision, attended to it in a remarkable manner ; being raised up by providence, as

it were, to guard from alteration, even those very passages of their own scripture which testified against themselves, and proved the divine origin of the mission of Christ. And thus again, through the means of its enemies, the truth of our religion is established; which is therefore true, our enemies themselves being judges.

Now these remarks, on the subject of the Old Testament, appear to me to be necessary, before I introduce another topic of peculiar importance, in connection with the evidence of christianity; and no less interesting,—or less diversified than the evidence from miracles, and those historical portions to which I alluded last night: I mean the evidence of prophecy. You may remember that I endeavoured, when last we met, to show you how christianity was traced upwards to God as the author of nature. Now, in taking a brief view of the subject of prophecy, my object will be to trace christianity upwards to God, as the author of Providence, and as the supreme ruler of all events. The existence and wisdom of God are easily demonstrated, as we all know, from the works of nature, and I would

endeavour to explain what is the true process of inductive philosophy, which rises step by step,—rises from nature, up to nature's God;—and so when we reflect on the order of providence; when we call to mind the wondrous dealings of God with his reasonable creatures; when we remember the various providential occurrences in our own experience,—we trace all these events upwards to their author,—that is God: and I have often thought that there is clearly no evidence more satisfactory of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Divine Being than this especial providence, which all his children can not fail to remark in the course of experience;—we often find that circumstances, which appear to be of a very trivial nature, lead to most important consequences.—

“ Ah! who shall say how great the plan  
Which this day's incident began?  
Too small, perhaps, the slight occasion,  
For our dim-sighted observation;  
It pass'd unnoticed as the bird  
Which cleaves the silent air unheard,  
And yet may prove, when understood,  
The harbinger of endless good.”

Now I suppose there are but few of us that

have not observed occurrences,—little occurrences, in our own lives and circumstances, which answer to this description; and I am sure no christian, who has marked the course of his own existence, can fail to rise upwards in his mind, from the transition of providence, to its supreme and ever present author. We come then to this point, that God is the ruler of all events, and that all the events which happen, belong to that vast chain of providence which he alone holds in his hand, and with which he alone can possibly be acquainted:—the depths of the past, the present, and the future, are all one to him; but the actual knowledge of the future, more especially, is one of those divine attributes with which we have every reason to believe that no creature can possibly interfere, because the future belongs to the hidden counsel of an all-wise and unsearchable Being. It is very true, that sagacious men may often make a very good guess about the future; it is very true that some persons are much more long-sighted than others, and often form very plausible and correct notions, as it afterwards turns out, about that which may come at a



future day; and it is also true that we are enabled to guess at the future by analogy, and that when, under certain circumstances, we have seen certain things happen, we of course conclude that under the same circumstances the same things will happen again; indeed we cannot possibly get rid of that sense which God has given to us, of the uniformity of the sequences of nature. We know the sun rose yesterday; we know it rose to-day; we feel quite sure it will rise to-morrow;—therefore, so far we can form a notion of the future. But really to know the future, really to know those events which will be brought forward in the development of that mighty and mysterious chain of providence which God holds in his own hands, is, in the strictest sense of the word, an exclusively divine attribute; and therefore if a religion comes attested by prophecies of events which were future, and even very distant, at the time when the prophecy is uttered, we have a distinct proof, independently of miracles, which establishes the divine origin of that religion. And it is a very remarkable thing, that christianity is distinguished from all other religions by this

particular mark; that impostors have not ventured upon attesting their religion by even an attempt at prophecy. Mahomet, for instance, was too wise to attempt prophecy; he knew that, within the scope of a little time, the facts that would happen would contradict his assertions, and overturn his religion at the foundation. But there is nothing by which christianity is more marked and distinguished; there is nothing that more strikingly pervades the whole of the Holy Scriptures than a line of prophecy: and I think the more we examine it, and the more we compare it with historical events recorded by authentic historians, and known to ourselves, the more we shall be persuaded, and fully convinced, that all scriptures were given by inspiration of God! Now there are certain conditions which must be fulfilled in order to establish the divine origin of a prophecy. In the first place, we must be in possession of evidence, that the prophecy was really delivered before the event took place; that is the first condition. The second condition is this—that the event to which the prophecy relates, should be of a nature so entirely past

the scope of the mere sagacious conjecture of man, and so complex in its nature, as to be beyond the reach of human sagacity, and only to be accounted for by divine inspiration. The third condition is, that the prophecy shall be known to have been accurately fulfilled in its several parts on the testimony of authentic history.

Now if I fulfil these three conditions; and can make them out clearly, I establish the reasoning as it relates to prophecy. And I will now take a few specimens from the Old and New Testament prophecies, in order to point out in what a remarkable manner these conditions are fulfilled by the prophecies contained in the holy scriptures. The first condition I have already alluded to; and I consider, that no more need be said, to prove that both the Old and New Testaments were genuine productions, and written by the authors whose names they bear, and in the age in which they profess to have been written. And, as the prophecies which are contained in Scripture, relate to events which were future at that time, I consider the first condition clear. The ground is clear, as far as it relates

to that; and then let us look at the events which were the subject of prophecy; I am quite aware that they are very numerous, for the prophecies contained in the Old Testament relate to a very great variety of nations, and a great variety of events; and it is almost difficult, in the multitude of those prophecies, all of which answer my two other conditions; it is almost difficult to select one in preference to another. In the first place, I wish to advert to the prophecy which our Lord Jesus Christ delivered on the subject of Jerusalem, when his disciples came to inquire when those things should be of which he was speaking; for they were pointing out the magnificent edifice of the temple, and Jesus Christ said that the time should come when not one stone should be left on another; and when they inquired when those things should be, and what should be the sign of his coming at the end of the world, you will find that he goes into a description of various circumstances; first, as it relates to that part of the question, when these things should be, that is, when the temple of Jerusalem should be destroyed. And in the first place he says, that that generation

should not pass away before all those things happened. In speaking of the day of his coming to judgment, he says, of that day and hour knoweth no man, not even the angels of God; but with regard to the first points, he gives most striking and definite information; in the first place, that there shall be a general persecution of christianity; and, in the next, that there shall be wars, and rumours of wars, in various parts of the world; and he mentions, in the third place, that there shall be signs in heaven, and earthquakes in divers places; he mentions that false Christs should arise and deceive many; and then he declares that Jerusalem shall be encompassed with armies, and that there should be such a time of distress experienced as had never been before known on earth; he describes the entire destruction of Jerusalem, and, as I before said, that not one stone of the temple should be left upon another; and not only in one passage are these descriptions given, but the prophecy is repeated again and again.

For the accomplishment of these things, we turn to the authentic history of Josephus, and of some of the Roman historians, and



there we find, in the first place, that false Christs arose at that time, in several places, and deceived many. Persons who professed to be Christ arose, and many persons went after them. We have authentic history, that the christians were exposed, during that period, to the most dreadful persecution; we find that there were commotions and wars arising among many nations at that time, in various parts of the Roman empire; and what Josephus particularly mentions, and also Tacitus, and other Roman historians, the signs which were seen in heaven, probably astronomical signs, and many that may be traced to electricity; there were, I say, certain signs, extraordinary darkness, and occurrences of that description, besides earthquakes in various places. And in the year 70, Titus, son of Vespasian, the Roman emperor, and afterwards emperor himself, at the head of a vast army, invaded Judea. Jerusalem is encompassed with armies; the Roman eagle is found standing on the holy places; and we find, from the history of Josephus, that the sufferings of the Jewish people, during that period, exceeded any

thing that is known from the records of history to have taken place on any occasion; for crowds and multitudes of Jews had entered into the city, before Jerusalem was besieged, in consequence of its being the time of one of the public festivals, the feast of Tabernacles: the city was therefore filled, crowded, with inhabitants at the time. They were torn by intestine factions of the most violent kind, and were reduced to the most dreadful distress in the course of that long siege. It is recorded, that no less than one million one hundred thousand persons perished in that event, so fully fulfilling our Lord's words, that the distress occasioned on that occasion should far exceed anything that was known in the history of man: but here there is an affecting circumstance to allude to, which throws a peculiar light on the subject, as it relates to the Prophecy: but we go back to a far more ancient date than the words of our Saviour on the subject; we go back to the book of Deuteronomy, and you will find in one of the latter chapters of that book, the curses which are pronounced against the Jews in case of their disobedience; and among other

curses, it is declared that so great shall be the distress and straitness in which they shall be placed, when besieged by their enemies in their walls, that even the delicate woman,—the woman, who was so delicate as not to put her foot upon the ground, should be found supporting life by the flesh of her own children. What a most remarkable Prophecy! how entirely past all the reach of human conjecture; and yet we have a definite account of the fulfilment of that Prophecy on three separate occasions; the one was when Benhadad, king of Syria was besieging Damascus; you remember the story of the two women; the children of one had been devoured one day, and the other woman withheld the other the next day. When Nebuchadnezzar afterwards besieged the city, Jeremiah, in the Lamentations, says, that the pitiful women had sodden their own children; and finally, when Jerusalem was encompassed by the armies of Titus, when it was torn with intestine factions, when the straitness that was suffered during that siege was carried to the greatest extremity, a similar event happened, which is related in the most express terms by Josephus; that some of those

brutal savages who headed those factions, and were going from house to house to spoil, to rob, and to slaughter, came to the house of a delicate lady,—a lady so delicate, that we may suppose, according to the description, she would not set her foot upon the ground ; and yet they found her in the act of devouring her own child—Mary, the daughter of Eleazer ; the name is given, as well as all the particulars of the circumstance, and her character as a lady,

Here we find, in the works of Josephus, an authentic historian of the first century, a plain evidence of the literal fulfilment of a most definite, a most marked, and a most surprising prophecy, which was delivered about fifteen hundred years before the christian era. Here we have a complete fulfilment of my second condition ; the whole circumstance of the siege of Jerusalem, the whole circumstance of the distress which was then experienced, and the whole circumstance of those events which accompanied the siege, together with the scattering of the Jews afterwards among all nations, which was also mentioned. All these things are plainly recorded in prophecy, and all

entirely past the common reach of human sagacity. There was no reason in the world to expect any such thing; and to crown all, to give every effect to the prophecy, we find this peculiar circumstance, to which we have adverted, mentioned by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy, and every circumstance also clearly fulfilled in history. These clearly, are events far beyond the reach of human conjecture,—complex, extraordinary, past all conjecture in their nature, and therefore fulfilling my second condition; and the third condition, the fulfilment of them, recorded in an unquestionably authentic history, and altogether independent of the prophecy! We have therefore in these prophecies respecting Jerusalem, and in their fulfilment a most clear and unquestionable evidence of the divine origin of the holy scriptures, as well as of the divine origin of the relating of which these prophecies were a mark or witness!

Now there is another part of this subject, with respect to Jerusalem, on which perhaps a few sentences may be spoken to a good purpose. There arose in the fourth century of the christian era a most violent enemy against christianity; I mean the Emperor



Julian, who was a person of remarkable character, and very considerable information. Well acquainted with these Prophecies; he was yet determined by his power and his might to afford a practical refutation of those Prophecies: he therefore determined that the temple should no longer continue in a state of desolation; that the Jews should be brought back to their own native city; that Jerusalem should again arise in its native splendour; and he confided the task of rebuilding the Temple to his favourite Alypius. He placed large treasures in his hands; put an army under his disposal; the soldiers of which were to become workmen on that occasion. He said, "Go and build the temple of Jerusalem, I will refute the Prophecies; I will shew that the Temple shall be built, and stand, and all the Jews shall still continue their own worship, in spite of these christians whom I abhor." Alypius repairs to Jerusalem with his men and treasures, and immediately he begins the work with every possible outward advantage which circumstances could afford, obtained by the power and treasures of the Emperor; and what is the practical result?

No sooner was the work begun on Mount Moriah, than balls of fire issued from the mountain, and entirely prevented the progress of the work; again and again the attempt was made; life after life was lost in the service; and at last Alypius, with all his army, and treasures, was obliged to abandon the undertaking, and freely confess to the Emperor that it was impossible; and the work was given up. Now of this fact we are in possession of a most undoubted historical evidence; and I do not know that my young friends can have a better or more agreeable exercise of their understanding than in reading Bishop Wayland's book, entitled "Jerusalem," in which the whole of these facts are spoken of; and they are also declared by several Roman, Hebrew, and christian writers: and even Gibbon, allows that they were respectable and proper witnesses; but we have another witness of the fact, and the testimony of another enemy to christianity; Ammianus Marcellinus, an eminent Roman historian, who lived at the time, who was the personal friend of Alypius and Julian, and was cognisant of all the facts of the case, has left them plainly on record,

in the books of his history ; the fact is they are as undoubted as any fact can be in history, and thus it appears that by an act of divine providence, it is unnecessary for us to settle whether it was directly miraculous or not ; whether it could be accounted for by the instrumentality of any philosophical cause, or whether it was (as I believe it was) directly miraculous, it is not our present duty to inquire ; one thing is certain, that such was the event of the case, that the prophecy remained to be fulfilled without interruption, for Jerusalem was left in the pre-determined desolation, and the Jews were continued in their scattered and desolate condition, which, according to the prophecy, must continue until the terms of the gospel are fulfilled.

Well then, turn your views to the Jews themselves ; can anything be more precise than the prophecy contained in the same chapter of the book of Deuteronomy ; one of the latter chapters ; and other parts of the books of Moses, respecting the sufferings which were to come on the Jews in case of disobedience ? They were to be scattered among all the nations of the earth ; how they were to be a proverb, a

bye word, trodden under foot, persecuted ; how they were to be robbed, spoiled, and pillaged ; and we know that we have before us in the most striking manner the fulfilment of these prophecies, and yet “ not a grain of them was to fall to the earth ;” that is to say, although they were to be mingled among all nations, they were still to maintain their national character, and still to be known as a peculiar people ; and it is very remarkable that their character, is in various respects developed ; their love of money is particularly mentioned, and their gold is mentioned by Ezekiel, that it should be to them the stumbling block of iniquity ; and various other points are mentioned respecting them. Now all those were past human conjecture, they were entirely beyond the reach of human sagacity ; and yet we know, we have it before us, that these things are completely fulfilled, and no man can compare what he knows of the character of the Jewish people of this time, with the words of Moses in the book of Deuteronomy without perceiving a plain proof that scripture is given by inspiration of God, and that our religion, being testified of and borne witness to by those



prophecies, bears upon it the plainest marks of its divine origin.

I will advert to one or two more circumstances of this kind; I suppose among all the cities of antiquity there was no city more remarkably wicked; no city more loaded with riches; no city more teeming with prosperity, than the city of Tyre. It was the commercial emporium of the ancient world, and remarkable for the luxury, and pride, and wealth of its inhabitants. Well, Ezekiel comes forward, and says that it shall be utterly destroyed; that the very ruins of Tyre—that her very dust shall be scraped away, *scraped away!* what an extraordinary expression! that she should be left as the top of a rock, and that the fishermen should spread their nets there. Was anything in the world more improbable; more past the reach of human conjecture? Was any prophecy that ever was professed to be delivered, more entirely beyond the scope of man's sagacity? Certainly none; nothing in the world could be more striking, or more peculiar, or unexpected, or unlikely; and yet this prophecy has received the most literal accomplishment; this ancient city of Tyre was besieged by Nebu-



chadnezzar and his army, and was destroyed; and then Tyre arises again on a little island close by the sea coast, or in it indeed, and becomes richer, and prouder, and more glorious, than ever; well, Alexander the Great comes and invades Asia, and makes an attack upon Tyre, this commercial emporium of the ancient world, and in order to obtain possession of the new city of Tyre, what does he do? Why he scrapes the dust of the ruins of old Tyre literally away, and forms a mound with this ruin, the dust of those ruins, with which he passes across the strait, and by that means obtains access to the new city; so that that prophecy is literally accomplished, that "The dust is scraped away from her." Alexander certainly had no intention of fulfilling the prophecy; the last thing that could have entered into his mind was to afford a proof of the christian religion; but he has done so, and he actually scraped the dust of the city, of ancient Tyre, and formed a mound with it, and by that means obtained access to the new city, broke in on the city, and destroyed it; and now both the old and the new cities are found to be exactly what is described; they

are like the top of a bare rock, a small fisherman's cabin in one of the two: and here again we have the testimony of an enemy; a Frenchman goes and travels in the East, (a notorious infidel,) and he comes to Tyre; and what does he see? Why he tells us, (little thinking that he is affording us a proof of christianity,) that the first thing that meets his eye, is the fisherman spreading his net on the rock; he records it in his works, and an English traveller of the name of Maundrell sees the fact; and here is a literal fulfilment of the prophecy. Now you see how entirely the conditions are all fulfilled. How, first, a proof that the prophecy was delivered long before the event happened; secondly, the nature, the surprising and peculiar nature of the event, beyond all human sagacity; and thirdly, the testimony of authentic profane historians and modern travellers; an infidel, an enemy, as to the very facts which were the subject of the prophecy; here then we have a delightful evidence, a most satisfactory evidence, of the divine origin of the holy scriptures, and of our holy religion.

Now, this just reminds me of a fact, which

I will mention by the way, though it does not exactly fall in with this part of my subject; how curiously the truth of Scripture has been developed by many modern travellers; and I will just give you an instance, which strikes my memory at this moment. You know the town of Philippi; when Paul came to Phillippi, the Philippians (in the 16th chapter, I think, of the Acts) called themselves Romans, you will find. And how came they to be Romans? Here is a question which naturally puzzles the commentator. The answer is, undoubtedly, they were a colony of Rome; for the Romans were in the habit of settling colonies in different parts of the world, and they had the privileges of Roman citizenship, and they must have been colonists; but there is no account of that in history, and we were obliged to take it for granted, till lately. A modern traveller goes into that spot, and scrapes up a coin, and on this coin he found this inscription, "Philippii Colonia;" and here the whole thing is explained: and so, at the end of 18 centuries, up springs a little coin from the ground which throws a beautiful light on the history of the

Acts of the Apostles, and the plainest confirmation of the truth of that history. Now this is the very nature of truth, which springs up in all directions, and in all ages : and you will find that it has become more and more confirmed as time rolls on, and there is nothing on the other side :—there is the great strength of our argument.

Well now, Babylon. What a wonderful place was Babylon, more than thirty miles in circumference, with a wall of immense thickness and breadth, so that the chariots were driven abreast on the top of the wall ; inhabited by a vast population ; the king of Babylon called the king of kings, because all the surrounding nations were tributary to him ; and I suppose we can form no idea of the importance of the city, and its vast power and strength. Well, that makes no difference to a man like Isaiah, who, in the spirit of the Lord, comes forward and prophesies that it should be utterly destroyed ; that her two leaved gates should be opened ; that the stream of her river should be turned aside ; her water course turned aside ; and that Cyrus (calling him by name,) should open the two

leaved gates : all of which exactly happened in the term of years. Cyrus turned the course of the river ; he opened the two leaved-gates, and obtained possession of the city : further than that, the city was to be entirely destroyed, and the time was to come when not a remnant was to be left, only a heap of ruins ; and even the shepherds should not lodge there, it should be a place for the habitations of wild beasts of the forest ; so entirely desolate should that vast, proud, wondrous capital become, that it should be no longer for the habitation of men, but for the wild beasts of the forest. We have it recorded in the fourth century, (it is a curious circumstance) that on or near the site on which Babylon used to stand, was converted by the Persians into a park for wild beasts ; they thought nothing of accomplishing the prophecy ; they cared nothing about the scripture ; the last thing they thought of was to afford a proof of our religion, but they did so ; and a man was travelling in that neighbourhood not long ago, and he found the city of ancient Babylon in a state of entire desolation, scarcely a trace of the ancient city, only a few heaps



of desolate ruins among the desert waste; and what does he see there? Why one of the first objects that meets his view at a distance is that of a lordly lion stalking about, a perfect accomplishment of the prophecy. What man could see that lion, hear of that lion, or read of that lion, without perceiving in that peculiar event a marked accomplishment of ancient prophecy.

Then Edom. What can be more curious than the accomplishment of the prophecies about Edom? It lay between Judea and Egypt, and was the country which we now call Arabia Petrea. Edom was once a country of great importance. "Oh thou who dwellest in the cleft of the rock," (this is the language of the prophet Obadiah) "though thou buildest thy nest with the eagle, the Lord shall bring thee to the ground." They are described in the holy scriptures as a most powerful and numerous people, and their cities described as being built on the tops of rocks and places of immense natural strength; and then the prophet goes on to declare, that Edom shall be utterly laid waste, so entirely, that no traveller should be able to pass

through her; and behold the whole of it is accomplished. I suppose it is considered nearly an impossibility for any traveller now to pass through the land of Edom, so perfect is the waste, so entire the desolation, and so extreme is the danger; but there were two gentlemen, with whom I have some little acquaintance personally, who lately determined to see what they could do in penetrating into the land of Edom;—they are two naval officers, (Captains Keeling and Mangles), and they actually found their way to the old city of Edom; and there they found immense buildings of ruins in the rocks, and a great number of sepulchres hewn out of the rocks, and all the ruins of an ancient city of prodigious strength, exactly answering the old description, and now so desolate that no traveller can pass through that country.

Now who does not perceive that all the conditions are accomplished? You have a proof of the antiquity of the prophecies;—the events to which the prophecies relate are past all human sagacity, and as for the fulfilment, you have it from the mouths of most respectable men now living; so that in the

nineteenth century we are furnished with unquestionable evidence that those who uttered those prophecies spoke by inspiration of God, and that the religion to which they bear testimony is indeed the religion of God himself. Who else can know the future ?

There is one point in this subject which I dare not omit, it is so peculiarly important and interesting :—the whole of the Old Testament is distinguished by a line of prophecy relating to those events of which the New Testament contains the historical account, and there is as great and as beautiful a correspondence between the Old and New Testaments, as there is between the lungs of the human body and the air which we breathe ;—no man can meditate on the formation and structure of the human lungs on the one hand, and the formation and composition of the atmosphere on the other, without perceiving that they are fitted one to the other by a designing hand of perfect wisdom ; if the lungs had been differently constructed, we could not inhale the air ; if the air had been differently composed, to inhale it would have been death instead of life :—who does not

perceive the matchless hand of divine wisdom and design in this agreement! Did the lungs manufacture the air? Has the air any tendency to produce the lungs? The very thought is foolish in the extreme; but a master hand has prepared them both, and fitted them one to another, and no man can efface the effect which has resulted from that design.

And so you will find, friends, on the comparison of the Old and New Testaments, that they are adapted to each other, so as to make up a perfect union and accordant whole. You have in the Old Testament a most marvellous line of prophecy respecting an individual; you have in the New Testament an authentic history of that individual, fulfilling the whole of that chain of prophecy. Now allow me to mention a few circumstances connected with this subject. To go through the whole of the prophecies relating to our Saviour would be quite beyond the limits of our time,—but a little sketch of the subject:—

In the first place, in the third of Genesis, the first promise that is made, and the curse pronounced upon the serpent, is, that the seed

of the woman should bruise the serpent's head; that was a general description which is developed in all its parts as we proceed. Christ, the seed of the woman, was to obtain an eternal ascendancy over sin, and therefore was to be truly man.

You go on a little further in the book of Genesis, till you come to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" therefore this deliverer, this Saviour, was not only to be of the human race, but of the seed of Abraham. You go on to the 49th of Genesis; "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come, the peace-giver and sent of God." He was to come therefore of the tribe of Judah; here is a further illumination. You then go forward to the book of Jeremiah; "After those days, saith the Lord, I will raise up unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and execute justice and judgment in the earth:" here is a further illumination. He was to be of the family of David, or according to the words, "A branch out of the stem of Jesse, out of the root of Jesse, the father of David." Here, then, you have



his humanity, his nation, his tribe, his family: and in the 5th chapter of Micah you have his birth-place: "And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth he that shall rule all Israel;" there is his birth-place. Then you have the precise date of his coming; 70 weeks are appointed from the going forth of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the prince; to put an end to transgression, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and so on. The date of the decree which was issued by Artaxerxes for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, we know from history, and according to the common Jewish enumeration, 490 years, brings us exactly (as far as I can now calculate) to the time of the death of our Saviour.

We have, therefore, the exact time when he was to come: then we have his character; righteousness was to be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins, and with equity was he to judge all nations. His holiness is described in the clearest manner in the 11th chapter of Isaiah. Then we have his sufferings: is there anything in the world more striking and more important than the

prophecy contained in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah? I will say a little more on that point soon, but there is a very complete account of his whole stay in the world, his being rejected by the Jews, led as a lamb to the slaughter, and of his being wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. Again, we have his resurrection in the very same chapter; "When thou hast made his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days,"—prolong his days—there is his resurrection. Again, in the 16th Psalm; "Thou wouldst not leave my soul in hell, (or in the grave as it may be read) neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption;" then we have many prophecies of his reign, and government, of which there shall be no end. You will perceive that these prophecies are poured in upon us in different ages, through the instrumentality of different prophets. One man contributes one thing to the stock of information, another man another thing to the same stock: there are various rays of light pouring in on this subject at various times from different quarters, and all meeting in a single focus; but

more especially there are points in these prophecies of a most marked and peculiar character; indeed to the very last, when the humanity of Christ and his divine descent are so particularly mentioned, there is an express mention of his divinity: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." "His name shall be called Jehovah, the Lord our righteousness;" (in the 23rd Chapter of Jeremiah, the one I before quoted.) But you now perceive, from the short account I have given, how very remarkable all those prophecies respecting our Saviour are; first their great complexity, and the information which they unfold—such as the tribe of his virgin mother, and even the lesser particulars of the case; in his thirst, "they gave him gall and vinegar to drink, parted his garments among them, and cast lots for his vesture," (in the 22nd Psalm,) even the smallest particulars; here is light pouring in upon us from various quarters, and all the particulars of the case, and the whole account

is of the most surprising nature, far beyond the reach of human conjecture. These prophecies are scattered over the sacred volume, we have to pick them out; they come one by one, incidentally as it were, and often mingled with other things. Further, you will observe that many of them are enigmatical in their nature, they could not be understood, by the persons who delivered them or heard them, unless they were inspired to understand that which they were inspired to deliver; for example, the point I just now mentioned about prolonging his days, "When thou hast made his soul an offering for sin, (when, that is, when they put him to death) he shall prolong his days." Here was an enigma; no one could understand that at the time, unless they were inspired to understand it, and you will find in the end of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, the prophecy may truly be called enigmatical; it is entirely impossible that any man at the time it was delivered should understand its bearing, unless it was by inspiration. At the end of the 52nd chapter of Isaiah you will find "His form was marred more than any man's, his countenance and his

form more than the sons of men, so shall he sprinkle many nations." What can be the meaning of it? It was all in obscurity at the time it was delivered: when you come to the New Testament, the enigma is solved, the difficulty is removed, a blaze of light is poured on the subject, every particular is fulfilled. For instance, our blessed Saviour's visage was more marred than any man's with sorrows and afflictions; his crown, his thorns, more than any man's: his form pierced by the nails, pierced by the spear, more marred than any man's, and so shall he sprinkle many nations. We turn to the apostles, and we find that the blood of Christ must be sprinkled on all our hearts by faith, and that by his meritorious death he has procured for us the gift of the Holy Spirit, by which he sprinkles all nations; therefore the whole difficulty is removed, and in the Old Testament you find every difficulty gone. His incarnation, his divine character, his miraculous birth, the date at which he was to be born, his humility, his low estate, his sufferings, his righteous character, his violent death, his resurrection, his prolonging his days, and his glorious reign: the whole comes



before us with a flood of light, and no man can for a moment doubt that here there is the full accomplishment of the prophecies !

I wish to impress on the minds of my young friends, that such is the nature of these prophecies respecting our Saviour, that they had no tendency whatever to accomplish themselves, from their enigmatical nature, for it was only by the events that the prophecies were explained ; and the persons who accomplished the prophecies were persons who were enemies to the truth, in a great variety of instances ; for instance, the Roman soldiers little thought that they were accomplishing the prophecy of scripture, when they cast lots for the garments of our Lord ; the enemies of truth little thought that they were accomplishing any prophecy of scripture when they wagged their heads at our Lord on the cross, and when they gave him gall and vinegar to drink. And they shew that the prophecies were accomplished by things not of man's procuring, which arises by the order of providence, in a great variety of instances through the instrumentality of the enemies of Jesus, and yet the accomplishment is perfect, and

the enigma is fully solved. Now you can illustrate it by the subject of hieroglyphics ; you go to Egypt, and you find a place covered with hieroglyphics, and no man can understand it ; it has been a literary curiosity for many ages ; but a doctor Young arises, and a Champollion, and they discover a key to these hieroglyphics, and in a moment the whole is as clear and as easy to read as any newspaper ; and thus when you come to the New Testament, you find in it those perfect facts which you assume the most difficult, and all is light : and we find ourselves in a moral demonstration, of the most perfect character, of the divine origin both of the Old and New Testaments.

These prophecies respecting our Saviour are of peculiar importance, because they were uttered doubtless for the very purpose of affording us an evidence of the truth of that religion which the scriptures introduce to our view ; they are a seal which never can be broken ; they are a testimony which never can be removed into a corner ; and they afford a sufficient answer to all the cavils, doubts and arguments of all unbelievers. I think I have

said enough for the purpose of proving that. as on the one hand christianity is traced through the intervention of miracles, to God, as the author of nature, so on the other hand christianity is traced through the intervention of the prophecies, to God, as the author of providence.

I should wish to occupy a little time with a very brief sketch of another part of the same subject which I hinted at, last evening. Christianity is traced to God, as the moral governor of the world. That evidences of christianity are so communicated to us, is a subject of wonderful variety, scope, and depth: it may be said there is no end to the subject. I will venture to say that discourses might be delivered upon it, evening after evening, with scarcely a perception of exhausting the subject, but we must apply just a few; and although the arguments of miracles, and prophecies are quite sufficient in themselves to prove our points, and wholly incapable of any refutation, I consider that the strongest point of all, is the internal evidence by which we trace our holy religion, in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, to the moral

governor of the world. Let any man take the pains of collecting from the works of the ancient heathen philosophers, the wisest and most learned, all the information which they can give us on the subject of the Supreme Being :—a good deal might be collected from them on the subject; they were visited by some rays of light; they probably had some lingering, transient notion of God; they might possibly some of them learn something from the Jews; but beyond all this there is no evidence, in my mind, I think it may be abundantly proved, that a certain measure of divine illumination is bestowed on all the children of men, whatever may be their condition as to outward ignorance, and that the ancient heathen philosophers, for example, were not left without some feeble rays of light from heaven; and I am bold to confess my opinion that there are many passages in their works, which can be accounted for only by that principle; but still, friends, I am prepared to mark the distinction between the early day light, and the blaze of noon; and when I compare the theologies of Plato, of Aristotle, and even of Socrates and Cicero; when I compare

the theology of those authors, with the theology of Isaiah, and David, and Jeremiah, and the other prophets; and Solomon, and Moses, more particularly, it is indeed like the comparison of the faint twilight with the blaze of noon. It is in the scriptures, and in the scriptures only, that we find the attributes of God developed in all their splendour, and in all their beauty, and in all their strength; and were I to point out one particular evidence, which I consider would establish the divine authority of the Old and New Testaments, I should say, look at the account which those volumes contain of God himself. It is needless to mention to you the almost innumerable passages which relate to the subject; but you know friends, that we find in the scriptures, that God is eternal; from everlasting to everlasting; who was, and is, and is to come. You find also, that God is a spirit invisible, and is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. You will find nothing like that in any of the heathen philosophers. You will find again, that God is omnipotent; that he made heaven and earth, and all things that are in them; that in the beginning, he created the heaven



and the earth; that he made all things out of nothing. Now this is an idea which you cannot trace in the heathen philosophers,—his making all things out of nothing; though some fully acknowledge him as a creator, in one sense of the word. You find in the holy scriptures that he is omnipresent. What a magnificent idea, what a glorious and sublime conception! “Whither shall I go from thy spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there also.” These are the natural attributes of God, as they are called; and then his perfect wisdom;—“He stretched out the heavens by his discretion, and wisdom was with him when he laid the foundation of the earth.” His providence is another attribute frequently mentioned. And then his moral attributes; his justice, his holiness; how often do the scriptures set forth the holiness of God: “Of purer eyes than to behold evil.” His perfect justice, his equity, his moral government. I mentioned his goodness; and above all, what I think Bishop Horne, in his work on the Psalms, ventures to call his darling attri-

bute, the attribute of mercy. I should like to inquire of my young friends, who are accustomed to the Greek literature, where can they find anything, within the whole compass of ancient literature, worthy of the comparison with these three words, "God is love?" My opinion, is that those three words contain a distinct and unanswerable evidence of the divine origin of scripture; "God is love."

You are to remember that the ancient Greek and Latin philosophers, were many of them persons of great learning; of deep and comprehensive powers of mind: of the highest degree of mental acquirements: educated to the highest point to which man could be, at that time; and you are also to remember, that many of the writers of the Old and New Testaments were illiterate men, and very badly educated; and that there was little science among the Jews; that they were in various respects, rather a rigid and independent people, many of them; and yet you find these well educated and learned philosophers, coming forward with that degree of information on the subject, which may be compared to

twilight : and you find these illiterate persons, coming forward with that blaze of illumination, which can only be compared to the noon-day sun. What can account for the difference ? Is there any man who dares to say that it can be accounted for on any other principle whatever, but the divine origin of the Scriptures, and the character which those scriptures testify ? Take the moral law, which you may trace to the same unenlightened age, as I shall have an opportunity of explaining on a future evening. But when you compare the moral system of Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero, with the moral system of the bible, there is the same difference to be proved ; a most wonderful difference in the degree of light. Now one of the marks of inspiration is, the concentrating of a good deal of important truth, in a very short compass. And what do you think all those ancient laws would contain ; the whole laws ? Why, " Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy mind, and all thy might ; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ; " here is the fulfilling of the law. How unspeakably superior is the moral law, as it is developed in this

short sentence, to all the speeches of the great body of heathen philosophers; and what a plain evidence we have, in these very words, that ours is the religion which flows from the fathomless fountain of infinite wisdom and love.

Let any man take our Saviour's sermon on the mount; and I will venture to say, that, if he is a man of any moral feeling, of any moral discernment, of any nice taste, on the subject of virtue; he has, in that sermon on the mount, a most infinite, internal proof of the divine authority of our religion. Let us point out one or two instances; take the first beatitude. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Now this is a point which distinguishes the moral system of the bible. The whole moral system of the bible may be said to be founded, as it were, on humility; from humility, may be said to spring other virtues in abundance; now humility, contrition, brokenness, poverty of spirit, are absolutely essential to a christian character: but when you come to open the pages of the ancient philosophers, the inspired philosophers of Greece, and read, we find that there is

much, very much, to flatter the pride of man and to nurse himself in the notion of his own original virtue. Poverty of spirit would, by many of the ancient writers, have been considered a shame and a folly, and unworthy of the very character of a man; and yet I should like to know, whether there is any one moral quality, which works so well in practice, and so upholds the welfare of man, in the power of God, as humility, and brokenness of spirit? And here we have a distinguishing point, of the highest moral importance, embosomed in the code of christianity; distinguishing it from all the other codes, and affording an evidence in itself, of its divine origin. Then again, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Here is another point, in which our Saviour traces the virtue of man, to that spring from which it must come; that is, the heart made pure. He tells us, that man's heart naturally brings forth the works of evil; and that, till it is made pure, by the power of the holy spirit,—renewed by God under the influence of that spirit; that the spring and origin of all morals, is their purity of heart—a most distinguishing feature. For you will



generally find, that whatever was written on morals, by uninspired persons, is external; only the surface of things; it does not go down into the depth of human motives: but more especially the moral system of the bible is distinguished by this circumstance, that it always brings forward love to God, as the very foundation of the whole. And here there is a marked distinction from all the other moral systems, which have ever been invented. We are taught by our Saviour; we are taught by his apostles, that the first principle of morals, is to love God with all our hearts and with all our souls; and from this principle, all that is virtuous and excellent (either for the glory of God, or the welfare of man) is found to spring. And if we take these points into view, and contrast them with whatever has been produced in any age, by moral, uninspired persons, the contrast affords a most abundant evidence of the divine origin of scripture. It is also to be remembered that, whatever you find in modern writers, of correct theology, or true morals, we find in its original form in the Holy Scriptures; and though you may find some sayings on this

subject in the writings of believers, they are borrowed, all of them borrowed, from the sacred pages.

I point, therefore, to the broad features of the attributes of God, unfolded in the scriptures, and to the broad features of moral law, as distinguished from the uninspired systems of morality, as affording a most unquestionable proof, that our holy religion, which is traced through the intervention of miracles, to God, as the author of nature, and through the intervention of prophecy, to God, as the author of providence, must also be traced through the intervention of its own internal, moral, and spiritual character, to God, as the moral governor of the world; as he who is holy, great, and true. But before I leave this part of the subject, I must just advert to a point which throws very additional light on it, and may be said to crown the whole; that the moral law of the Holy Scriptures was embodied in the example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. And I know not that I could point the attention of young friends to a subject, more full of interest, or more replete with unanswerable evidence, as it relates to

the divine origin of our holy religion, than the recorded example, life, and conversation, of our Lord Jesus Christ, put together by four historians, and sustained with a precision with a simplicity, with a beauty, with a completeness, with a harmony, for which nothing but truth can possibly account. Oh! it is indeed a wonderful subject of contemplation! Think of the perfect purity of Jesus Christ; without blemish, and without spot; holy, harmless, undefiled in spirit. Think of his undoubted integrity; that he is the truth, the very truth, and, we always find, the noble magnanimous reprover of all iniquity; fearless of all the terrors of man's judgment, fearless of all the sufferings which man can inflict. Then think of that remarkable combination with this magnanimity, this integrity, this holy boldness, of meekness, patience, gentleness, forbearance; gentle as the lamb; how meek and patient in all his sufferings; and even after he was hanging on the fatal cross, his language was, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Then think of his active beneficence; abounding in love and charity towards all: all his miracles; the miracles of compassion;

for ever engaged in relieving distress ; full of mercy and good works. Then think of his devotional character ; how he spent whole nights in the solitude of the mountain side, in communion with his God. Then think of his absolute resignation to his father's will ; " If it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; yet, not as I will, but as thou wilt. If this cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. My duty is to do the will of my Father who is in heaven, and to finish his work." Think of his perfect fortitude : think of the firmness and quietness with which he suffered. Above all, think of that wondrous and mysterious act of infinite charity and condescension, when he who " Was in the form of God, and thought it not a robbery to be equal with God, made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and being formed and fashioned as a man, humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Think of the height of his glory ; think of the depth of his humiliation ; and you will then obtain some idea, according to the finiteness of your conception,

of the infinite condescension, of the unbounded charity of Christ.

You see that it is a standing miracle, which proves the truth of christianity, beyond the shadow of a single doubt, that a character such as our Lord Jesus Christ, should even be described and sustained without a fallacy, even by *one* writer. But when you find *four* historians, and the writers of the Epistles also, all of them speaking and writing on this subject, not in a formal, not in a systematic, but in an incidental manner; and when you find that the character of Christ comes out from the whole of their productions, in a manner perfectly natural, and that the character is sustained, through the whole, without the least degree of stumbling, or without the least degree of error, or difficulty, or contradiction, with perfect niceness, and developed in all its pure beauty and harmony, I say, you have there a standing miracle, an internal evidence, of the most undoubted character, of the divine origin of that religion which Christ came to reveal. And further, when you compare the character thus developed, with the moral law, which he himself proclaimed, and find that



the two things tally one with another, and perfectly correspond, even as the canopy of heaven above, corresponds with the verditural surface of the earth beneath; I say, friends, that in this beautiful accordance, in the mighty scope, variety, and spirituality, of the divine law; in the matchless character with which that law was embodied in the example of Christ, and in the fitness of one to the other, you have a moral evidence, strong enough to suspend a world upon. It is a chain on which any weight might be hung with impunity, for it cannot be broken.

You will now perceive, friends, the point to which we are arrived. I have been appealing to you as rational men and women; I have been appealing to the noblest faculty of your reason. You know that the good shall live by faith; you also know, that the christian religion is founded, as far as it relates to evidence, on the basis of moral reason. You know that there is nothing in the world more truly reasonable, more justly philosophical, more clearly founded on unquestionable truth, and upon that which is proved to be the truth, than the christian religion. And when you

take into view these three lines of argument, miracles, prophecy, and the moral weight of christianity; when you go further, and trace it in its practical workings; when you find that it is the means, in the hands of God's divine providence, for that new creation, which is still more powerfully indicative of divine power than the whole creation itself; when you find that it is the means of converting, as far as it is truly received, the barren wilderness of man's thorny, fruitless, and wicked heart, into the garden of the Lord; when you find that it is the means of making that dreary wilderness blossom as the rose, even as the rose of Sharon; when you take all these things into view, away with the shadow of a doubt for ever and for evermore. And, oh! let us no longer treat christianity as if it were a delusion; for there are multitudes among the professors of the christian name, who, on the one hand, admit its truth, and on the other hand, live as it were not true. But I call on you, my dear young friends, to act on a better principle; and knowing, from unquestionable evidence, that christianity is true, and that it is the religion of God, I call upon

you to act on this deliberate result, and henceforth to resign yourselves to the service of your heavenly father, and, in good earnest, to take up your cross, and follow Jesus Christ,

## Third Lecture.

ON THE

### DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

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IN making a statement, when we last met, of the internal evidence of the truth of christianity, I confined my attention very much to the revelation of the attributes of the Most High; of the moral law; and an examination of the character of our Lord Jesus Christ. But, in point of fact, the argument respecting the internal evidence of the truth of our religion, lies still deeper, and extends much further than I have hitherto mentioned; for there are other great truths revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures of a most novel and peculiar kind, far beyond the reach of human imagination, and all the invention of moral philosophy, They are entirely beyond the perception of

man, but nevertheless, so completely adapted to their purpose, as to carry with them an internal weight of evidence, of very great strength indeed, that they are the doctrines, not of man, but of God.

I hardly know a wider or more interesting field in which we might expatiate, than in the internal evidence of the truth of christianity. The philosophical truth of the effect of gravitation upon all material bodies—that they are drawn towards each other by a certain force of attraction, now appears a most familiar circumstance. In this day, we give a ready assent to this doctrine of philosophy ; but we can hardly believe that 150 years ago, this doctrine which now appears so plain and so palpable, was entirely unknown : I know of nothing that more remarkably distinguishes the great discovery of Sir Isaac Newton, than the simplicity and plainness of the truth, and its universal palpability, which is now so universally seen and understood. In the same way, there are some things declared in the Holy Scriptures, which are so evident, now that they are revealed, that we can hardly suppose that men ever could be igno-



rant of such truths ; and yet, until they were revealed by the Holy Scriptures, they were wholly unknown to men, and had never been reached by the utmost flights of uninspired moral philosophy. You have then, more particularly from that broad feature of divine truth, so plainly revealed in scripture, and so amply confirmed by experience, so transfused into every page of the history of man—the universal corruption of human nature. In how many, in how various forms, has the wickedness of man displayed itself? Who can take up the page of history, and observe how they are stained with blood and all sorts of criminality, without perceiving that there must be some general cause for the facts which abound on every side, of the description which I have now mentioned? For example, when we reflect on the horrors of the slave trade, and slavery,—horrors, familiar to the minds of many of my young friends, I doubt not, to what original cause can we trace them? to what general cause, to what *one* cause can we trace all these multitudinous forms of iniquity which deface the history of our species? Now this is a question which

never was answered by uninspired moral philosophers; who would always set out at the wrong end, and begin with describing man as virtuous instead of vicious. But the Holy Scriptures declare the original cause of these iniquities, namely, the corruption of the heart of man in his fallen state; and I hardly know any one truth, which more remarkably distinguishes the records of inspiration, than that which is couched in such forcible language, such concentrated language, by the prophet Jeremiah; "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." And further, the origin and root of this corruption is also developed in scripture, in the history which is there given of the fall of our first parents, and of the descent of their corrupt nature from father to son in every generation.

Now you will perceive from this brief statement, that the Holy Scriptures represent mankind as requiring, not only the revelation of divine truth, not only light, not only information, not only precept, but, in one word, Redemption. A vast, divine, powerful price is required, for the restoration of fallen and corrupt man to his original state of virtue and

conformity to the divine will. The whole bearing of the christian religion is practical, and this is one of the most important principles for my young friends to keep in view, because when we enter a little into these points, it is not for the purpose of gratifying a spirit of speculation or of human curiosity, but to shew the practical workings of that mighty plan, which God has ordained for man's salvation.

And here we come to what may truly be called the very centre and turning point, the very hinge and moving principle, of the christian system; and that is, the Divinity of Jesus Christ. Were we in need of information only, were we by nature virtuous, and had only to have information of our duty in order to be enabled to do it; were there no change to be wrought in us; were there no guilt to be removed from us; then indeed we might do with a religion which would exclude the divine character of a dear Redeemer; then indeed it would be enough for us, that he should be a mere man and prophet, and correctly declare those truths which it is our duty to believe, and those virtues which we

are called to practise. But God deals with us as with lost sinners, and when we come to view ourselves in this character, and in this capacity—when we find that we are in danger of everlasting destruction, and that nothing but a hand of divine and omnipotent love, can save us from this destruction, then we have recourse with joy and gratitude to the glorious doctrine, that Jesus Christ our Saviour, is not only man, but God! You know that it is written in scripture, that the just shall live by faith; that without faith it is impossible to please God, and that without faith, no man can be recovered from his lost condition. Now in whom do the scriptures require us to believe, in order that we may witness the salvation of God? There is nothing more abhorrent from the whole scope of scripture, nothing more opposed to the harmony and nature of truth, than the strange notion which some persons entertain, that faith in a mere man, or in a creature of God, a mere creature of God, can be the means of his salvation. No, friends! God admits of no rival. He is a jealous God. He allows of no form of idolatry; and although we are called upon

to believe the words of any inspired prophet, it is idolatry in the sight of God, that we should believe in any mere prophet, as the Saviour in whom we are to trust. "I am the Lord; I am King and God," saith Jehovah, "and besides me there is no Saviour." Now if my young friends will apply this principle, and illustrate by it certain passages in the New Testament, the consequence will be, that they will immediately perceive the force of the evidence of scripture for the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. What does he himself say? "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth on me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me, shall never die." There he upholds himself as the object, the appointed object of saving faith: and again we may compare with this the words of the apostle; "No other name is given under heaven whereby we can be saved, but the name of Jesus." So that the very fact of our being required to believe in him, as the Saviour of our souls, when compared with the general tenor of scripture, at once establishes the doctrine of his divinity; and it is quite im-



possible (as it gives it) consistently with the principles of scripture, to believe for the purpose of salvation, in any being however glorious, however wise, however exalted: nay, not in the highest of all archangels, for the purpose of salvation, except in God. However, I trust that my beloved young friends have no disposition to turn away from that head and spring of all our hopes. I think I can trust them for not entertaining any desire to build their house on any other foundation. I believe it is very generally known, and truly acknowledged among us, that this is a foundation that is plain, and which no man can overturn—Christ Jesus. At the same time I consider that it is a very pleasing and a necessary duty for those who have it in their power, to endeavour in some degree to enlighten the understanding of their younger brethren and sisters, respecting that flood of evidence, which from every quarter is poured forth, in wondrous harmony, to elucidate, to establish, and for ever to confirm and settle, the doctrine of the divinity of Christ.

But before I enter into a view of this evidence, I must just be allowed to explain the

ground on which I am now standing. In unfolding the evidence of the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, I have appealed exclusively to the reasoning faculty ; but when the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures is once established, we come into the dawn of childlike faith, and there is no sound method of argument left us, but unfolding those passages of scripture which bear on particular points. Our only ground of evidence here, is, God has said it, and therefore we must believe it. Lord Bacon, who was certainly one of the most sagacious of our species, a man of sound reason, says, and admirably well, that revealed theology is the sabbath and leaven of man's speculation ; and I wish my young friends may take this principle home with them, and never forget it. There is no folly in the world greater or more dangerous, than bringing our own speculation to bear on the investigation of christian doctrine, instead of taking the simple words proved to us by the Lord in his Holy Scriptures, in their simple meaning. We are in this respect to be as new born babes, desiring the sincere milk of the word, not to gratify our curiosity, not to

puff us up with notions, but for a practical purpose, that we may grow thereby ; and the reason, the true reason why men do not receive (many of them), the truths declared in scripture in their native simplicity and beauty, is this—that they have got into the habit of teaching the apostles and prophets, instead of being taught by them. We are to sit at the feet of the apostles and prophets as children, and we are to allow them to teach us, and receive their lessons with all humility. And, oh, that my beloved young friends, towards whom my heart glows with much affection, may all of them be firmly built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Then they will be in the way of all that is true, of all that is happy, of all that is holy.

Now let an earnest inquirer, who desires to be taught by the apostles and prophets, open the New Testament, and he will there find the delineation of that wondrous character to which I adverted on a former evening. He will read an account of an individual who performed divine works; who assumed the divine character; and whose character in various

respects might truly be called super-human ; although at the same time he was encompassed with the natural infirmities of man, but without sin ; who was born and died a human being. Now the question immediately arises ; had this wondrous individual any existence before his human birth, or was he simply and wholly a man, born as a man, and not uniting with his humanity any higher or more powerful nature ? Let the Evangelist answer this question : let Jesus Christ himself in his own gracious words, answer this question. In the first place, you know that John the Baptist, was older by half a year than our blessed Saviour, and yet what does John the Baptist say about Christ ? He says, “ He that cometh after me, was preferred before me, for he was before me : ” therefore, Christ existed before John the Baptist. David, you know, lived about a thousand years before the christian era, and yet David, in spirit, acknowledged Christ to be his Lord. “ The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool : ” therefore Christ was existing in some nature, at the time of David, a thousand years before his incarna-

tion. Well, we go backwards, and we come to that servant of the Lord, Job, who according to all probability, was of an earlier date than Moses, or possibly cotemporary with him; we may say about 1500 years before Christ. What does Job say on the subject? "Oh that my words were written, (you will find it in the 19th chapter,) oh that they were printed in a book, that they were graven with an iron pen, and graven in a rock. I know that my redeemer liveth, and shall stand in the latter day upon the earth:" so that Christ was living 1500 years before his appearance in the world. Well, then Abraham; Abraham who lived about 1900 years before Christ. "Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad, (in the 8th Chapter of John); "Why," said the Jews, "Thou art not 50 years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" What was the answer? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." Well, but in the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth: was Christ in existence then? Yes, for Christ was called the word by the Apostle John, in the beginning of his gospel, and he says, "In the begin-



ning was the Word, and the Word was with God ; the same was in the beginning with God ;" I shall come afterwards, to the other part of the passage ; but here is a proof of his existence, when heaven and earth were made. Did he exist before ? read the words of his own prayer, in the 17th of John, " And now, oh my Father, glorify thou me, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." There we have that point. Did he then exist from all eternity ? Was there no limit to his nature or being ? None whatsoever. Turn to the 5th chapter of Micah, and there you will find, " And thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be the ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting." And there friends, is an end of the whole matter, with regard to his anterior existence. But the doctrine of his existing from all eternity ; is furthermore established, by a remarkable passage in the book of Revelations, where in the first place, God the Father, and afterwards our Lord Jesus Christ uses language like this, " I am the beginning and the

ending. "I am the Alpha and the Omega;" (the first and last letters in the Greek alphabet). This expression is what is called a Hebraism; for the Jews were accustomed to represent the perfection of anything, by bringing together the first and last letters of the alphabet, and they used to say that the price was from *Aleph* to *Tau* (the first and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet) and such other things. If a man was from *Aleph* to *Tau*, in any particular thing, he was perfect in such a matter. And therefore when our Saviour comes forward, and says, "I am Alpha and Omega," it means to say with respect to duration; it is obvious that it respects duration: he says, "In me is the perfection of duration:" that is to say, "I am the eternal being, which was, and is, and is to come."

Well, now friends, I think this is a chain of evidence, which no man who has the slightest regard for the plain meaning of scripture, can by any possibility thwart, deny, or contradict. It is one thing for a man to tell me, in the face of all the evidence which I have already produced, that the scriptures are a forgery. Can I consider such a man is not

the most frivolous of his species, and the most absurd, unless his absurdity be overcome by the absurdity of that man, who on the one hand, acknowledges that the scriptures are genuine, and on the other hand, rejects their plain and most perceptive testimony, to the divinity of Jesus Christ, or to any other doctrine? Now comes the great question, therefore: in what nature was it that our blessed Saviour pre-existed? Was it in the nature of an archangel, of the highest of created beings?—No friends; we are in possession of the clearest scriptural evidence, that it was in the nature and the sense of God himself; for in the first place, we have already proved our point, by the very fact of his eternal pre-existence. There is but one being who is from everlasting to everlasting, and that being is God: and in the next place, we find him represented, in a most remarkable passage, in the 2nd chapter of Philippians, as not thinking it a robbery to be equal with God. “Who, being in the form of God;” (now the word *form*, there is the same, in all probability, with the word nature. It is the peculiar manner in which the word form was used in that day; who being

in the *nature* of God,) “thought it not a robbery to be equal with God, but, condescending from that high estate, made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man.” But here is another point arising before me; by what do we prove the being and omnipotence of God? Is it not by pointing out the wonderful works of nature? Is it not by proving, in innumerable designs, the existence of an ever-present designer? All the work of the creation, is plainly ascribed to our Lord Jesus Christ; “By him all things were made, and without him, was not anything made that was made.” This is most definite; all things made by him; not one thing in all the visible, glorious, boundless universe, made without him. And again in the 10th verse of the same chapter of John; “He came into the world, and the world was made by him.” What can be more definite? Then in the first of Hebrews, “God, in these last days, hath spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed the heir of all things, by whom also he made the world.” And then in the first of Colossians, and the 16th verse,

(and I do hope that my friends will record these passages on the tablets of their memory), speaking of who is the image of the invisible God; the first of all, (of *every* creature of the whole creation, is the meaning), "For by him were all things created, whether they be visible or invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him." What can be more explicit? Who can doubt for a single moment, therefore, that he is God?

But further than that, there is the spiritual and internal work: there is the work of divine illumination, wherewith he can bestow the spirit of righteousness upon man; wherewith he can enlighten him with the light of moral truth; who with it, can guide him by a heavenly light, on his way to heaven. Could man do that? Could an angel do that? Could any human creature do it? No, it is the work of God himself, and this work is ascribed to Christ; for Christ is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. It is often a matter of surprise to me, that any person should have dared, at any time, to



ascribe to our religion, many doubts respecting the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; because that great doctrine which we have always so plainly advocated, that Christ is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, by his spirit, contains in itself as direct, as clear, as powerful a proof of his actual deity, as anything which it is possible to conceive.

Now friends, there is a branch of this subject, into the particulars of which time will not allow me to go, but I wish to recommend it to the investigation of my young friends. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the patriarchs and prophets of old, were better acquainted with the Son of God, than many of us are aware of. They were acquainted with a mysterious messenger of the Most High, sometimes called the *word*, and sometimes the *angel* of God, who appeared to them on a variety of occasions, and who constantly in his addresses to them assumed the character, and often the name of God; as for example, when he spoke to Hagar in the wilderness, and when her language in reply was, "Thou God seest me:" and as when he spoke to Moses in the

burning bush, (it burnt but was not consumed), what did he say? I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob:" and again, when he conversed with Abraham, on the plain of Mamre; when he called to Abraham again out of heaven, when the knife was proffered to his Son; "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thy only son from *me*." And again, when he appeared to Gideon and Manoah, (the father of Sampson), and on many other occasions. There can be no doubt that it was our blessed Redeemer, who was known by Job as the living one, and of whom Jacob speaks, when he says, "The angel who redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads." Oh may the angel that can alone redeem us from all evil, bless my beloved young friends; and may they be his whole servants, and his faithful followers. When all these things occurred, there was the visible appearance of a wondrous being, who was sent of God the Father, and, nevertheless, claimed plainly both the attributes and the name of God. And can we for a moment doubt who this was? There is a very remarkable evidence in the 3rd chapter

of Malachi, "The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the messenger, (or angel as it is in Hebrew), that I delight in; but who shall abide the day of his coming, or who shall stand when he appears? For he is as the refiner's fire, and like fuller's soap." Now you will be so kind as to understand, that the word angel, simply means messenger: the sent of God, "The angel of the Covenant;" and he was to come to his own temple. And then the apostle says, on the subject of his incarnation, "In the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, made of a woman; made under the law, that he might redeem those under the law." This agrees with what we read in the 1st chapter of John, and the 14th verse, "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father; full of grace and truth." Now there is nothing more cardinal in christianity; nothing of higher import to its practical efficacy, than a full acknowledgment of the doctrine of the incarnation. It was the great point by which the apostles were commanded to try the spirits; "Every spirit that con-

fesses that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is of God," says the apostle. Of course this expression would be totally inapplicable to a man, born into the world after the usual way, but it applies to a being who pre-existed in a higher nature, and took the nature of man upon him, and that is its only possible meaning, I apprehend. And when we turn to the 2nd of Hebrews, we there find, that "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Now this is indeed a deep display, far beyond the scope of human intelligence. No man living, can possibly say how it was; it is one of those secrets of a divine and infinite being, which must be for ever hidden from us, during our present state of existence. But what of that my dear friends? Is there any one of you that can tell me, how the body and the soul are connected together? In what way their union is effected? You know the fact; you cannot deny the fact, but the *how* is beyond the scope of your investigation. And so the doctrine is clear, of the union of the divine and human natures in Christ. You cannot deny the doctrine; it gleams forth in the brightest characters in every page

of scripture ; but the *how*, the mode of that doctrine, is not a subject for human speculation. The doctrine is to be received with the simplicity of children, for its practical purpose ; and let me tell you, my dear friends, that on this cardinal doctrine ; on this wonderful and mysterious union, wholly incomprehensible in its mode, but wholly intelligible in its operations, hangs the whole mighty system of our salvation. And may we all rejoice in the remembrance, that Christ was man to suffer and to sympathize, and God to save.

Now the doctrine, that Christ was really man, and took upon him the body and soul of a man, when he was born a child into the world, is abundantly evidenced throughout the New Testament, and the Old Testament. "Unto us a child is born;" and his origin was from the Israelites, and from the tribe of Judah, and from the family of David, and his birth, of his virgin mother, I have already alluded to on a former occasion. Follow him to the well of Sychar, weary with his journey in that hot and dreary region, and mark the traces of the weakness of the man. Follow



him to the garden of Gethsemane, and mark the deep agitation of a human soul : " My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." Follow him to Mount Calvary, and mark the quivering lips of the dying man, when the words had just escaped them, " It is finished," and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. But although, my beloved friends, his humanity was so clearly marked, it was but a veil, through which the head of his divinity, continued to shine on every side with lustrous brightness : for when he was standing upon earth, he performed the works of God ; when the poor leper came and bowed down at his feet, and said, " If thou wilt thou canst make me clean ;" when he pronounced his own Almighty fiat, and said, " I will ; be thou clean," he spoke, he acted, in the character of God. When he stood at the grave of Lazarus and commanded the dead to rise, in his own authority, he spoke and he acted, in the same character. When in the midst of the boisterous ocean, he arose and rebuked the wild and strong elements of nature ; when on a single word of his, all was stillness and all was calm, he spoke and he acted in the character of God.

And when he raised himself from the dead, he acted in the same character; for it is well worthy of observation, that the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is ascribed by the New Testament, both to the Father and to the Son. The Father raised up the Son, and yet it is ascribed to the Son, who is one with him in the divine nature. "Destroy this temple, and after three days I will raise it up again;" and he spake of the temple of his body. Therefore, he performed the works of God. Well but, some of my young friends say, did not the apostles also perform the works of God? Did not they work miracles? Yes truly; the prophets of old, and the apostles, were enabled to work miracles; that was to give the sign of their introduction. When Moses lifted up his arm over the Red Sea, *the Lord caused* the waters to flow back. When Joshua uttered his memorable words; it was *the Lord* who listened to his prayer, and stayed the bodies of heaven in their course. When Peter and John, at the beautiful gate of the temple, were made the means of restoring the poor cripple, they spoke not, they acted not in their own names, but they said, "In the name of *Jesus*

*Christ of Nazareth*, rise up and walk ;” and afterwards Peter declared that by His name, even by Him, he was restored to that perfect soundness in the presence of them all ; so that the apostles went and preached, and the Lord Jesus worked with them, confirming their word by signs following. And if you will observe the difference between the miracles of our Lord and of his apostles, you will see in both of them holy proofs of his divinity. Now, as one particular instance ; when the apostle Peter stood beside the bedside of Eneas, what did he say ; “ Eneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.” Well friends, he performed the works of God through Christ ; through Christ, *who* assumed the character of God when he said, “ Before Abraham was, (he did not say I was), he said, “ Before Abraham was, *I am*. Here he spoke in the character of God. Oh ! may all the world acknowledge thy word, that before all worlds, and from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God ! He spoke in the character of God, when he said, “ I am the resurrection and the life.” He spoke in the character of God, when he said, “ I and my Father are one : he that hath seen *me*, (again

he said), hath seen the Father; how sayest thou then, shew us the Father." Thus he plainly aspired on these occasions, and on many others, to the divine character; and when, after his resurrection, he breathed on his apostles, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," he spoke as one who could bestow the Holy Ghost; he spoke as God, and not alone that, but he received divine homage; he was the object of worship. When Cornelius in his mistaken zeal, bowed down at the feet of Peter, with an act that might be called worship, Peter said, "Stand up for I also am a man." When John, dazzled by the splendour of the angel who talked to him, bowed down to worship at the angel's feet, again went forth the language, "See thou do it not, I am thy fellow servant; worship God." But when the apostles were all bowed in worship before their Saviour, they met with no rebuke; when the wise men of the East, came and worshipped him, it was not accounted to them for a sin. When the poor man who had been born blind, first professed his faith in Jesus as the Son of God, and then shewed his faith by falling down and worshipping him, he met

with no rebuke. When the poor leper, sensible of his own bodily corruption, fell down and worshipped him, he met with no punishment for the act; he met with the blessed reward of his faith, and was delivered from his sickness. So you see, that even during the stay of our Lord upon earth, we have the clearest evidence of his divine character. By his death on the cross, he burst the bonds of death and sin. He appears again to his disciples; he ascends into heaven, and sits down on the right hand of the Majesty on High.

And here in describing his glorious reign, the sacred writers represent him as possessing divine power, and supreme authority over all beings. All power is given to Him in heaven and in earth; far above all principalities, and powers, and might, and dominion; and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth. Now here is an authority by which he rules over the universe, and which it is impossible he should possess, unless he were God. Then he is described as the author of grace; grace, the



most precious of all God's gifts; grace, by which our sinful souls are renovated and saved. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with our spirits! Then he is described as the object of prayer; Stephen addressed his prayers to the glorified Redeemer, when on the point of death he said, "Lay not this sin to their charge:" and again, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit." But we are taught, friends, that the hour is coming, when Christ will appear again for the judgment of the quick and dead; when the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; and while the scriptures plainly declare, that even in his reign in the day of judgment, he is Son of Man, still a friend to sympathize, a brother to sympathize, they also bear, in reference to all this subject, the clearest testimony to his divine attributes. Now can you conceive friends, is it possible for any man to imagine a stronger proof of the omnipotence of God than will be displayed by the resurrection of the dead, by the changing those innumerable spiritual bodies, like unto the body of our Lord himself; which shall be at the collection of the spirits of the just, made

perfect to all eternity? Yet this act is ascribed to Jesus Christ. "I am the bread of life, and I will raise them up at the last day;" and again in the 3rd chapter of Philippians, "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile bodies, and give unto us a body, like unto his own glorious body, according to the power wherewith he subdues all things unto himself." What can be more explicit?

Then all judgment is committed to him. "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ;" and how is it possible that any being whose intelligence is less than divine, can penetrate all the thoughts, all the actions, all the words of all mankind? No; it is in the character of God that Jesus Christ speaks, when he says, in the 2nd chapter of the book of Revelation, "I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works." And last of all, to him is ascribed the creation of all things visible. He is also represented as folding them up as a vesture, and bringing all things visible to their end. Well, then, you find, in the 1st chapter of the Epistle to the

Hebrews, "Thou Lord in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou endurest, and they all shall wax old as a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." Now, friends, it is wonderful, (if any man will take the trouble of reflecting on this wondrous line of evidence, which I have now endeavoured to unfold), if a man can trace it from its beginning to its end, and observe the agreement of one part with another. I say it is a line, a chain, a series and order of evidence, which has no parallel!

But there is one point, which I have at present withheld from your view; that, while we have this wondrous chain of evidence respecting the divine attributes of Christ, in every stage of his revealed history, we also find that he was called by the name of God, and that it was directly declared that he was God; and this crowns my whole argument. But what is the most singularly satisfactory, and worthy of our close remark, is, that the name of God, or the name of Jehovah, is

applied in scripture to our Lord Jesus Christ, in reference to all the successive stages of his history. In the first place, we read in the 1st chapter of John, "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God." There the name is most plainly ascribed to Christ in his pre-existence; to which many passages might be added from the history of the angel of the covenant. Then take his birth—"A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us." "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God," (9th chapter of Isaiah). Then take his mystery, his tarriance on earth; what says John the Baptist of our Saviour? "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, (John came to prepare for the ministry of Christ), prepare ye the way of the LORD," (that is the LORD in large letters, which always stands for Jehovah); "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of JEHOVAH." Well, he was made manifest by his incarnation, and by his outward minis-

try to the people. And what says the apostle in the 3rd chapter of Timothy? a passage on which I wish to observe, that the genuineness of it, though once disputed, is now brought out, by subsequent critical inquiry, with resistless force and illumination: "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified by the Spirit, (proved to be divine, that is, by his miraculous works), seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." It is clear, when we come even to the mysterious moment of his death, and we know that he could die only as man, but his divine character is asserted even in reference to this point, in the book of Zechariah. "And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, (saith Jehovah), and they shall mourn for him as a man mourneth for his only son, and they shall be in bitterness for him, as a man who is in bitterness for his first-born." Then his resurrection after his death. You remember the unbelieving Thomas: when our Lord shewed him his wounded side and hands, Thomas no longer dared to doubt, but he answered and said unto him, "My Lord and my God."



Now was this profession of faith acceptable to Jesus? Yes. "Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed."

Well, then we take his glorious reign; and there we have abundant passages: for example, "A king shall reign in righteousness." In the 23rd chapter of Jeremiah,—“I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a king shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and justice on the earth. And this is the name whereby he shall be called, the Lord (that is, Jehovah) our righteousness.” With this passage we compare another, and it is one among a selection, with which I may very well close my chain of evidence. In the 9th chapter of the epistle to the Romans, where the apostle mourns over his Jewish countrymen, and where he describes their many privileges; “Whose was the glory, and the adoption, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.” Now I wish just to observe, that to the best of my

knowledge and belief, after a long, and I may say studious examination of the subject, according to my opportunities and ability, I can say in truth, to the best of my knowledge and belief, that not one of the passages which I have this night quoted, is fairly capable on any critical grounds, of a different interpretation than I have now given to it. And I would just observe a very satisfactory circumstance, that the ancient fathers of the church, many of whom wrote in Greek, that is, they wrote in the very language in which these passages are given, many of them always used them in the same way, and gave them that interpretation which I have now done. They gave the original Greek, applying it just as I would translate it, and it is, in fact, capable of no other translation, and no other meaning: therefore do not for a moment be misled by any person who dares to say that such and such a passage, describing the divinity of Christ, is capable of a different interpretation; for, in point of fact, the more the subject is investigated, the more all the niceties of the language are known, the more we go into critical particulars of such passages, the more

is the only plain and orthodox interpretation established, beyond all possible contradiction. And therefore, you see the point to which we are brought; you prove the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, you plainly prove that the doctrine of scripture, is the divinity of Christ, and therefore you are compelled, not only by the obligation of the christian believer, but you are compelled by the principles of reason, of inductive philosophy, of common sense, to accept with the utmost readiness, to embrace with the greatest credulity, the glorious doctrine of the divinity of Christ: and may there not be a single individual in this interesting assembly, who shall ever turn his back on this greatest and most sublime truth, the very centre and spring of man's salvation.

Now before we separate, I wish to advert to another doctrine, most intimately connected with that of the divinity of Christ, and of equal importance in a practical point of view, freely acknowledged by all who are called orthodox christians, more and more confirmed, valued, and cherished, by all who love the truth, and know their own sinfulness: I mean this doctrine, that Jesus Christ, being clothed

with humanity, died on the cross to be a propitiation, or a sacrifice, for the sins of the whole world; the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; that he bore the penalty which was due to us, and that by his stripes we are healed. And the forgiveness of sin is attained by poor, sinful man, when he comes with a penitent heart, and believes in the Lord Jesus Christ who died for his sins. This doctrine is plainly declared by our Saviour himself, again and again; "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him, might not perish, but have eternal life." Again he said, "The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. Now look at the divinity of Christ. This is no new doctrine; when he came upon earth, it had been, to a certain extent, witnessed before; the Jews had always been accustomed to the shadow of it, and doubtless some of the more enlightened of them, had a sort of notion of the substance of it, though it might be a slight notion. But, when Abel offered a better sacrifice than Cain, when the

other prayed, when animal food was not permitted to man, and when there was no apparent meaning in slaying an innocent lamb; when he slew a lamb, and that was called a better sacrifice of faith:—I say, there was an expressive figure of that blessed truth, of which that shadow was fulfilled. When Abraham, instead of taking the lamb, was about to sacrifice his only begotten son, and when at last he plunged his knife into the ram caught in the thicket, what was it? It was a type, a figure of the sacrifice of Christ. When, morning and evening, (at nine in the morning and three in the afternoon), day after day, month after month, year after year, century after century, the lamb of the burnt offering, the spotless male lamb of a year old, was slain in the temple, always spotless, always pure, what was it? Was there any real efficacy in the blood of those animals, or were they a shadow of good things to come? Were they not expressive representatives of that one sacrifice which God hath prepared for all them that are sanctified? When on the great day of atonement, (16th chapter of Leviticus), the tenth day of the seventh month,



now called September, (the 9th month as we should call it), when on the tenth of that month, on the great day of atonement, the High Priest went into the Holy of Holies, with the blood of the bull and the goat, (the bullock sacrificed for his sin, and the goat for the sins of the people), and sprinkled the mercy-seat with their blood; when he confessed the sins of the people, over the head of the scape-goat, and the other goat finds its way into an unknown land, and takes away (in a figurative sense), the sins of the people with him;—when the High Priest before this ceremony, divested himself of his gorgeous robes and clothed himself in humble linen garments, and the victim was burnt without the camp; and when the whole ceremony was over, the High Priest again invested himself in the gorgeous robes he wore before:—do not you understand it? Are there any of my dear young friends, who do not know enough of the ever blessed truth, to read these types? who cannot see a most expressive representation of the whole mighty scheme? The High Priest unclothed himself of his glorious garments; Christ comes down from his glory in

heaven. The High Priest clothes himself in humble, lowly, linen garments, holy and pure; Christ took upon him the lowly nature of man. The High Priest sacrifices a bullock and a goat, for his own sins and the sins of the people; Christ offered up himself his own precious blood, and sprinkles that upon the mercy-seat. The victim is burnt without the camp; Christ was crucified without the walls of Jerusalem. The scape-goat carries away the sins of the people, to an unknown land and uninhabited; and what said John the Baptist of Christ? "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world." And friends, if you will come with a penitent and obedient heart, and truly believe on the crucified Immanuel, he will bear away all your sins, though they may be red like scarlet, as it were, into an unknown land and uninhabited; blessed be his name! And there is your only means of reconciliation; there is no other way to the Father—to happiness—to peace. Oh may you all come home to Christ; may you commit the burthen of your sins on him, and may you be individually invested in that white robe, which was made so white as

no fuller on earth could whiten it, because it was washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Well then, we come to the words of prophecy : oh how wonderful they are, friends ! I was speaking of the prophecy of the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, of a prophecy of the truth of our religion. " All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter. By his knowledge, shall my righteous servant justify many." Never was language more precise, more definite ; never was language less capable of a double interpretation. All is here unfolded to us ; the great doctrine that Christ bore the iniquities of us all upon him, and that we reap the reward ; they are here unfolded, and may it ever be precious to all our souls.

Well, then we come to the fulfilment. When we open the pages of the New Testament, does it not break upon us, a light unparalleled by the invention of man ? Does it not abound in every page of the apostles' writings ? When Paul once knew that Christ was his Saviour, he could not, as it were,

keep himself from the perpetual mention of the subject. "I determined not to know any thing, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." "All have sinned," says he in the 3rd chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, "and come short of the glory of God." "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, for the forgiveness of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." And Peter in his 1st chapter, says, "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot." Then in the Acts, John says, "He is a propitiation for our sins, (the word propitiation is the same word in the Greek, and answers to that word in the Hebrew, which in the Old Testament, was always translated atonement; and propitiation and atonement, are perfectly synonymous); therefore, "He is an *atone-ment* for our sins;" a sacrificial offering, is the meaning of it; "A propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world;" and mark those words,

“ For the sins of the whole world ;” for it is the grand doctrine of christianity, that Christ died for the sins of all mankind. Then turn to the Hebrews, and there you find that beautiful comparison between the shadow of the Law, and the substance of the gospel, which confirms and elucidates the whole subject in a most glorious manner. “ If the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit, offered himself without spot to God ; purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God ?” and finally, friends, though I might go from passage to passage, from writer to writer, and from book to book, till time would fail me ; finally, remember that glorious vision of the apostle John, when he saw the innumerable company of the redeemed, around the throne, gathered out of every kindred, and tongue, and people. And wherewith were they clothed ? They were clothed in white robes. And who were they ? “ They are they,” said the angel, “ who have passed through much tribulation, and washed their robes, and



made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Well, friends, if you desire, as unquestionably you do, to join that harmonious, glorious company, see that there be in you, the simplicity and strength of the christian faith; go, wash your robes in the blood of the Lamb. Now I cannot allow myself to conclude, without shortly pointing out the inseparable connection between these two doctrines. When a man once denies the divinity of Jesus Christ, he soon begins to deny the doctrine of the atonement. No man can entertain any proper view of the doctrine of atonement, unless he also admits the divinity of Christ. Mere man cannot atone for his brother. An angel, an archangel, the highest of mortal created intelligences, cannot bear the burden of universal sin. No, it is a burden which omnipotence alone can bear, and therefore here is a refuge, and here is a strength, and a joy, that he who was, and is, God for ever, was made man, that he might die on the cross to save us, and through a loving faith in his blood, we may live to all eternity. And by what possible means, my dear friends, could God so clearly display his abhorrence of sin;

as by appointing his own Son to be the only sacrifice for sin? On the other hand, by what possible means could God display his mercy to the sinner, with so much brilliancy and strength, as by sending his own Son into the world, to die for sinners? So that in this glorious dispensation, the holiness and love of God, are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other; and the divine attributes without being confused, are blended in matchless beauty, and matchless splendour; and I am bold to say that there is nothing which has ever been presented to the attention of man, which throws so glorious a light on the holiness and on the love of God, as the joint and inseparable doctrines, of the divinity and atonement of Jesus Christ. And therefore, friends, let us rejoice in this foundation; let us be strong and immovable in the faith once delivered to the saints; let us never veer to the right hand or to the left; let us imbibe these things with true simplicity; but oh! friends, let us remember that these things are to bear on our affections, they are to take hold of our love, they are to bring our love into action, they are to lead us by the cords

of love, into the path of obedience, and into the way of holiness; and thus we become new creatures in Christ Jesus; and how friends? Not by our own power; not by our own devising; not by our own imagination; not by the mere exercise of the understanding; but by the agency on the soul of man, of God's Holy Spirit. Now I have occupied the attention of my dear young friends long enough. Oh, that what has now been said, may fall deeply into many a memory, many a mind, and many a heart! But it is my intention, if the Lord permit, to occupy another evening, in the course of next week, in order to unfold the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, and especially to shew to my young friends, how remarkably scriptural were the views which the early friends were enlightened to take on this doctrine. I conceive that many of them would like to have a little information, and I propose, therefore, if life and health permit, to go into the scriptural view of the life and doctrine of the spirit, when we next meet together; and oh, that we may all be the spiritually minded followers, of the crucified, and risen, and glorified Immanuel.

## Fourth Lecture.

ON THE  
INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
AND THE  
*Peculiarities of the Society of Friends.*

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ALTHOUGH it is my particular wish to avoid confusing meetings of this description that are now gathered, with meetings for worship in the highest sense of the term, I am thankful for the remarks that we have had this evening, and I wish just to say in the first instance, that I am fully convinced, that nothing can qualify us for any religious service, but the Lord's Holy Spirit. There are, it is very true, a diversity of gifts, and the same person may be called upon at different times, to exercise different gifts; and the apostle Paul distin-

guishes between the gifts of preaching and teaching; but I beg leave explicitly to state, that as an individual, I dare not engage in what I apprehend to be the exercise of either of these gifts, otherwise than in simple dependence on the Lord's anointing, and I wish my dear friends to understand, that I would on no account appoint any one meeting of this description, did I not find it laid upon me as a duty arising at that specific time, and under a direct pointing to that specific object. I thought these words of explanation were due to my dear friends, that there might be no misunderstanding, on what I apprehend to be a simple subject; but I consider it a privilege to have the opportunity afforded me, under what I trust is some measure of the best means, of communicating information to my beloved young friends, on the most important of all subjects.

So long a time has now elapsed since we last met in this way, that my friends will, I trust, allow me just to refer shortly to the other evenings which we passed together. On the first evening, I was led to unfold the historical evidence of the genuineness of scrip-



ture, and the truth of the miracles, and the evidence afforded by the miracles themselves, of the divine origin of our holy religion. On the next occasion we considered together the subject of prophecy and its fulfilment, and the internal evidence of the christian religion; and I trust it was made fully apparent to those who were present on those occasions, that it is scarcely possible to conceive any moral evidence more strong, more diversified, or more harmonious, than that which proves the truth of the christian religion. On the third evening which we passed together, I endeavoured to give some information to my dear young friends, respecting the evidence contained in the scriptures themselves, of this cardinal and most important doctrine,—the internal divinity, and atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ, because I am well aware, that the great object of scripture, was to testify of Christ; and I do delight in endeavouring to lay before my young friends, the vast, harmonious, and most explicit chain of evidence, which proves the truth of these doctrines, as doctrines of scripture. I did at that time make an application, not only to the understanding, but

more especially to the memories of my young friends, and I trust the labour has not been lost in this respect; I trust the substance of this evidence has been remembered, and through the memory it may find its way to the heart, where alone true faith has its residence; saving faith. And now my present object is, to endeavour to unfold another most important and cardinal doctrine of religion, and to shew the evidence on which it rests: I mean the doctrine of the Holy Spirit; and if we should be favoured to get clearly through this subject, my young friends will then be left, I trust, with a clear general view upon their minds, of all that is essential, of all that is important, or peculiarly important, of those things which are written in the Holy Scriptures for our learning, and which immediately affect the greatest of all points—the salvation of our souls.

Now in treating on this part of the subject, I shall have to advert in the course of the evening, to the sentiments and principles of the religious Society of Friends, and to many of those views which at present distinguish them from other christian bodies. In doing

this, my object is not to enter into controversy, for I believe controversy will never do us good; my object is to elucidate the subject to the minds of my younger brethren and sisters, and to endeavour to shew them that our views are not in their nature sectarian, but that they are simple views of the religion of Jesus, as it is plainly contained in the New Testament. The more we know of religion, the less we shall value names, sects, and parties; but I trust the more my young friends examine the contents of the New Testament with care and impartiality, the more they will be confirmed in the root and ground of the christian testimonies, and the more forcibly they will feel impelled, with a greater degree of magnanimity to take up their cross in all these matters, and follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

When our blessed Saviour was about to leave his disciples and to ascend to his native glory, he gave them a commission to baptize all nations into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. I shall afterwards, I believe, find occasion to shew that according to my view of the subject, the

baptism which was here communicated to the disciples, was one of a purely spiritual nature. It was, as I believe, the baptism of the Word preached, and by the living and powerful ministry, they were to baptize their hearers, not *in* the name, but as it originally has it, *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. But the point to which I wish to solicit the attention of my young friends, on the present occasion, is this, that they are not only to be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, but also into the name of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost, as well as the Father and Son, is an object of the christian faith, and the christian allegiance. Now it is very evident that in this passage, the Father is described as the divine being, the Son is described in the same character, and the Holy Ghost is also described in the same character. We cannot suppose for a moment, that the Father and the Son should here be mentioned in what we may call their personal character; and that the Holy Ghost should here be mentioned only as an influence,—as a thing, however valuable, or however heavenly. No friends, a plain in-

terpretation of this passage, according to the law of sound criticism and plain sense, involves the doctrine that the Holy Ghost is God ; and this is one of those fundamental doctrines, which, I am happy to assert, was always maintained with clearness and integrity by our forefathers in the truth.

There are many other passages of scripture, which confirm this important doctrine. Do we not read, that when Paul and Barnabas were sent forth in the work of the ministry, the Holy Ghost said unto the persons who were then assembled, " Separate me Paul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have called them ? " Do we not read in the epistles of Paul, in the 12th chapter of the 1st epistle to the Corinthians, that " The Holy Ghost divideth his gifts to every man severally as he willeth ? " And when we examine the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of John's gospel, we shall find the Holy Ghost promised to the disciples in the name of the Comforter ; and it is expressly asserted, that he should not speak of himself, but that as he should hear, so should he speak ; that he should take of the things of Christ and shew them to the believer ;



and that he should guide us into all truth. Again, the Lord Jesus said to the woman of Samaria, "God is a spirit," and hence it plainly follows by the converse of the proposition, that the Spirit is God. Without pursuing a lengthened line of argument upon this point, I wish to impress it on the minds of all my young friends, as of essential importance; and I trust that every individual present, will indeed be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God, blessed for ever.

Now friends, are there any of you, who, because this doctrine is beyond the reach of human reason, are therefore ready to conclude that the doctrine cannot be received? This would be vain reasoning indeed; it is a doctrine not contrary to reason, but beyond it. There is one point of view in which God is one; there is another point of view in which he is three—Father, Son, and Spirit; and how these things are, what is the *mode* of this doctrine, which is not revealed to us, is beyond the utmost reach of our faculties; for God is an infinite and incomprehensible being, and the secret things belong unto the Lord, <sup>1</sup>

the things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our children to do them; and what we want to know, is but the way in which these high and holy doctrines, affect the great object of the soul's salvation; and while they are utterly beyond the scope of human philosophy, in their practical application they are clear to the simple-hearted believer. They were cordially received, they have been cordially received, by men of the most stupendous intellect; for instance, by such a man as Lord Bacon; and they are cordially received by the cottager, who only returns from his day's labour to read his chapter in the bible in the evening; and even by the child at school. The mode of these things is as much beyond the intellectual power of a Bacon or a Newton, as it is beyond the intellectual power of a little child; but the practical application of them for the good purpose of the soul's salvation, is equally clear to both. In fact, these things are apprehended by simple faith, and having already proved that the Holy Scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and contain pure truth without any mixture, true philosophy and the soundest reason, most

obviously demand our accepting the contents of scripture in simple faith ; and oh, that the faith of my beloved young friends, may be for ever confirmed, settled, and established in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, blessed for ever.

Now I think I have already had the opportunity of pointing out those passages, which prove that Jesus Christ died for the sins of all men. The Father would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of his truth ; the Son, in his human nature, died for all men ; and I believe that there is plain and sufficient evidence in scripture, that the Holy Spirit enlightens and visits all men ; and here the whole truth is preserved in what we may call even balance, and one part corresponds with another, and there is a beautiful harmony throughout, and the whole proclaims the glorious universality and perfect impartiality of the love of Jesus. Although at the same time we are perfectly aware that God is an omnipotent sovereign, and disposes of us as he pleases, and we are not to inquire into his matters, or to sit in judgment on the works of his providence ; and though we see but a very few li

of an endless, boundless chain, of which we are totally incapable of forming any conception; nevertheless I do hold, that this doctrine of the universal operation of the spirit of the Lord, is one of primary importance. I know it was boldly advocated in the face of the world, by our early friends. I know that it has been since maintained stedfastly in every age of our religious society, and I hope friends, it will always be precious to us, not because it is an opinion of our division of the church of Christ, but because it rests, as I believe, on the broad, immutable basis of simple truth, and so far is it from being peculiar to Friends, that I believe and know, that thousands and tens of thousands are increasingly prepared to adopt the blessed doctrine of the universality of spiritual light; and I can hardly refrain from saying, that on two very interesting occasions, when I was conversing in private with the late William Wilberforce, he assured me of his own conviction, that an effective offer of salvation was made to every man born into the world. I thought it a good testimony from a person so well known in what is justly called the evangelical world.

And how should an effective offer of salvation be made to every man born into the world, but by the light of the Holy Spirit? Now, my young friends may probably wish for more scriptural information on the subject; and were I requested to point out one passage of scripture, which contains, in my opinion, a proof of the truth, in never to be forgotten, and very comprehensive words, I would point out that memorable passage in the beginning of John's gospel; for in speaking of Christ in his divine character—in his original, eternal divinity, he says, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Now these expressions are very precise, and they are elucidated by the Jewish literature of the day; for it was a common Jewish phrase to describe every existing mortal, man, woman or child, to say, "A man born into the world." It was their current expression for this purpose, and peculiarly definite and precise in its meaning; and here is a declaration that Christ was the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. Now, we know that as a



revealer of truth in an external point of view, he was the light of the world, and when in the fulness of time, he took upon him our nature, and revealed the glorious gospel, it was like the rising of the morning sun, scattering all the shadows of night and of twilight. Let us never disparage that glorious light for a moment; but we know that the light of an outward revelation, up to the time when the apostle wrote these sentences, was very partially communicated to the children of men, and we may therefore safely conclude, nay, we must conclude, that there was some other respect in which Christ was the light which lighteth every man born into the world. And how could this be? There is but one way in which we can explain it, namely, that by his spirit, he doth give some light to all the children of men.

Now this subject is fully developed, as I apprehend, in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd chapters of the epistle to the Romans, where the apostle Paul is speaking of the degeneracy, the idolatry, and the wickedness of the Gentile world. On what grounds does the apostle convict the Gentile world of sin? What is

sin? Sin is the transgression of the law. What law? What law were those Gentiles in possession of? They might indeed derive some faint traces of it from original tradition, and I do not doubt\* that they did. Some of their most inquisitive philosophers might probably borrow some rays of light from their Jewish neighbours, though the Jews were very little known; probably they did. But the plainest argument upon which he convinces them of sin, rests on the broad basis that some light was bestowed upon them, which gave them each their responsibility to a superior being; and he expressly says that "that which is known of God was manifest in them; it was manifest in their consciences," and I believe there is no man living, whose intellectual faculties are in any degree developed, who does not feel, in spite of himself, that he is responsible for his actions to a superior being; to one who will be his judge, and who will reward or punish him according to his works. But not only so; there was a moral law known to these Gentiles; for the apostle expressly says they knew the just judgments of God, that those who do these

things, (speaking of their criminal practices) are worthy of death ; they not only did them, but rejoiced in all who did the same, or words to that effect. How did they know those just judgments of God ? How did they know this righteous rule ? (as the words may be rendered). Why it was written upon their hearts ; and in the next chapter, the apostle still further unfolds this subject, and speaks of many of the Gentiles, who actually did the works of the law, though they were without the law in its outward revelation. They did by nature without any outward revelation, the things contained in the law, "which shews the works of the law written on their hearts," says the apostle, "their consciences also bearing them witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." And he even describes them as justified by their faith ; they believed in Jesus as far as he was revealed to them, and they proved their faith by their works, and his law was written on their hearts.

Now when we take into view the great doctrine of human corruption, that man is utterly corrupt, and dead in all wickedness,

if we call to mind the same apostle's declaration, "I know that in me, (that is to say in my flesh, my carnal mind), there dwelleth no good thing," how are we to account for this very good thing which is written on his heart? How are we to account for the law of God written on the hearts of men? the law which is holy, and just, and pure, though it may shine very faintly, always the same in its nature? Are we to solicit this at man's carnal hand? Are we to call that an offer of righteousness? Is it a system which man may work for himself? No: the internal principles of the moral law, shine by their own natural light; they are in the invention of no human reasoning; they are the discovery of no human philosophy; it is a light bestowed upon all the children of men, not belonging to their corrupt and carnal nature, in which there is no good thing, but given to them, as we believe, and I trust shall always believe, through the redemption which was in Jesus Christ. He purchased it for them by that precious offering which was made on the cross for the sins of all mankind. Oh what a blessed boon! and what a most comforting

and satisfactory doctrine! that we not only receive the forgiveness of sin through the blood of Jesus, but the same precious blood-shedding has procured for us the universal light of God's Holy Spirit, shining in various degrees, and various measures; very faintly in some cases, but always the same in its nature.

Now it is sometimes observed, that some of the poor heathen, who are in an extremely degraded state, know very little of this law; and certainly the light appears to shine very faintly in them: but their rational faculties are not developed; they are like very little children in that respect; some may be compared to idiots, and this blessed light is bestowed upon us as rational creatures, and it is as the rational faculties become to be developed, that the moral principle also shews itself. I was thinking of a remarkable conversation which took place between a Baptist missionary of my acquaintance, and some poor Hindoos, with reference to this subject. Their rational faculties, are much more developed than the original inhabitants of New South Wales; they are very prone to reason. He



was preaching to a company of those persons on the subject of sin. "What is sin?" said one of them. "Sin, my brother, is the transgression of the law," said the preacher. "But what law do you mean? I do not admit your bible, neither do you admit mine." "But I will tell you what law I mean: when you go to the fair, or to the market place, and cheat, or lie, or steal, you feel that there is something within you that tells you that it is wrong: that is the law I mean; sin is the transgression of that law." "Oh! now brother, said he, I admit your argument is right;" and so the dispute was easily settled.

There are some very interesting passages in the works of the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, in reference to this subject; I wish my young friends were well acquainted with them. I am not going to compare that with the broad day-light of the gospel, but still those persons had some light, and they had more light than can be accounted for, by anything short of a few rays from the blessed source of the sun of righteousness. I remember one passage in Cicero, more particularly, which I think peculiarly interesting. I cannot

now repeat it exactly, but he tells us that there is a law which deters from crime on the one hand, and impels to duty on the other; which no man can alter, to which nothing can be added; which can never be abrogated; which is not one thing at one time, and one thing at another, one thing at Rome, and another thing at Athens; but, says he, the same eternal and comprehensive law, of the same eternal and unchanging God; comprehends all men in all ages, and those who refuse to obey that God, who is the instituter of this law, involve themselves in certain misery and penal consequences, although they may escape what the world calls punishment. Now, what a luminous passage; and shall *we* pretend to deny the existence of this law? I hope friends, we shall more and more feel the importance of it, and that we shall remember not only that this light truly shines in the heart of man, but that it is our bounden duty, nay it is our very life to obey it; and those who follow the light which is given to them, will have more light; and they will be led from one degree of virtue to another, by the power of the Lord's Spirit; for not only is there the universal

diffusion of moral light, but there is also the additional visitation of divine power connected with it; these two things are to be distinguished. I believe that every man born into the world has his day of visitation; and I apprehend that it is the plain doctrine of scripture, contained in the passage to which I have now referred, that Christ by his Spirit, is that true light which lighteth every man that is born into the world. And if this is not plain reasoning and plain evidence, (and if it doth not coincide with common expressions, I know not what can be plainer or more consistent with that expression) I know not what is.

But friends, while we speak of the universal operation of the influence of the Holy Spirit, we do not forget for one moment, the peculiar office of the Spirit; we do not forget that wondrous pouring forth of spiritual influence, which resulted in the existence of the Holy Scriptures. We do not forget that God, as a universal sovereign, places his blessed light on whom he pleases, and when he pleases, and qualifies them for his own work. No, we gladly declare our unalterable conviction,

that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and that the Holy Scriptures, of a truth, do contain an especial revelation of doctrines to be believed, and of duties to be practised, and bear on themselves the royal stamp of divine authority, which never can be moved. Well, we are blessed with that Holy book, and are we to suppose that being blessed with so precious, and so valuable, and so heavenly a gift, we are not to use it diligently, and that we are to sit down and expect a spiritual guidance, while we disuse the means that are put into our hands? Was that ever the doctrine of Friends? Never. Our early friends were deeply read in scripture. They knew the scripture, many of them, from beginning to end; they spent days, and hours, and weeks, in solitude, and their bibles were their companions; an observation which applies with peculiar force to George Fox, who may be in some respects called the founder of our society. And Robert Barclay broadly asserts, that if any man proclaims any doctrine, or pretends to any morality which is contrary to the scriptures, it is an invention of the devil. So say we in the present day.

To the test, to the outward test of scripture, all doctrines, all precepts, all opinions, all notions, must be brought, and they must stand or fall by that test. Our forefathers in the truth, were very particular in pointing the attention of their hearers, to those remarkable verses with which the bible is concluded, and which refer in the first instance, clearly to the book of Revelation; that, if any man add to the things which are written in that book, God will add to him the plagues that are written in that book; and if any man take away from the things which are written in that book, God will take away his part out of the good things which are written in that book, and out of the book of life. Now here we have the illumination of truth; here we have a clear outward test; but even this test must be used in reverent dependence on that Holy Spirit which gives it faith. And from what do the scriptures themselves derive their authority, but from immediate revelation, the immediate communication of the mind of God, to the mind of man.

It is not our business to sit and speculate on the state of the heathen world; one thing we are quite sure of; that it is our bounden



duty, as christians, to labour for the benefit of the heathen world ; and with regard to their lot when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ, we must leave that to the equity and mercy of God. But to bring this important subject home to our own experience, as we are circumstanced here, I am bold to say, that if we would be christians indeed, and really come to a practical and saving knowledge of christianity, there is but one way, and that is by giving ourselves up to the guidance and government of the Holy Spirit, by which we are visited and enlightened in various degrees, from our very infancy. Oh, how inexpressibly important, that we should maintain this blessed doctrine in all its strength, and all its integrity ! Would you know the truth, my dear young friends ? would you understand the doctrines of religion ? Would you be made sensible of their divine authority ? Then learn to obey the still, small voice of your inward teacher. “ If any man do the will of my Father,” said Jesus, “ he shall know of my doctrine, whether it be of God.” What can be clearer ? Now my young friends are not to expect the

fulness of light all at once ; they are to be diligent in reading the scriptures much, and in private prayer ; but above all let them take good care not to quench the Spirit. Obey the Spirit, follow the light of the Spirit of Christ, as it shines in your consciences, and you will have more light ; and when the light comes, it shines more and more. It will make some very important discoveries to you. It will shew you what poor, evil, wretched sinners you are ; it will humble you under a sense of your sins, and then you will find a refuge in Jesus Christ, and him crucified. The convictions of the Holy Spirit, which are often very gradual in their nature, go on for many months and years, and, as it were, increase with the very growth of the young and ingenuous mind. If there be a faithful obedience, they lead to conversion ; they lead to a settled faith in Jesus Christ ; they lead out of all darkness into all light, and, at last, they bring the obedient and believing soul to the feet of Jesus ; and then what a blessed change is wrought in the rational creature by faith. By faith we are justified ; by faith we receive the forgiveness of our sins ; by faith we are

consigned unto God; by faith we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our only Saviour. And then what is the practical knowledge? why a much larger effusion of the Spirit is poured forth upon the mind. The light by which you have been led to Christ, is redoubled and multiplied after you have come to Christ, according to his own words, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. The water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up unto everlasting life." I hope this subject is now clear to the minds of my young friends. I hope you will never let in a single doubt or difficulty upon it. I say it is as clear as the noon-day sun.

Now, what is the peculiar privilege of christian believers? What is the very characteristic of the new covenant? Turn to the 31st chapter of Jeremiah, and there you will see the characteristic of the new covenant.— "After those days saith the Lord, I will make a new covenant with the house of Judah, and the house of Israel; I will write my law upon their hearts, and I will put it into their inward parts, and they shall not need to teach every man his neighbour and brother, saying, Know

the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest, and I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more." So that under the glorious gospel dispensation, we have no need to say every man to his brother, "Know the Lord;" we are not to depend on others teaching; we are not to depend on human teaching; we are to have an all-sufficient teacher within; the pre-eminent influence of the Holy Spirit, that will teach us to know God; which they will not see; that will lead us onwards in the way of holiness; that will lead us in the way of all truth and all happiness. Here is the pre-eminent privilege; here is the true characteristic of the gospel dispensation. Now, this declaration in Jeremiah, precisely agrees with those gracious promises of our Lord about the gift of the comforter, "When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall guide you into all truth. The world seeth him not, neither knoweth him, but ye see him for he dwelleth in you, and shall be with you." "Because I live, ye shall live also." "I will come again," our Saviour says, in evident reference to the same doctrine,

“I will come again, I will see you again; because I live, ye shall live also.” Again, “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, he shall take of mine and shew it unto you.” He shall not speak of himself, as I said before; he shall take of the things of Christ and shew them to the believer; therefore, let us always keep this in view, that in order rightly to comprehend the doctrines of religion, and things of Christ, they must be unfolded to our understandings, and impressed upon our hearts by the immediate act of the Comforter; by the immediate communication of the mind of God to man; by immediate revelation. Here is the root and ground of our principles, and they are plain, scriptural principles. And, not only does this light guide into a right view of christian doctrines, not neglecting the scriptures, but using them;—it is also a guide to conduct; it leads into all holiness, as well as into all truth. “The anointing which you have received from him, abideth in you,” says John, in the second chapter of his Epistle, “and ye need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you all



things, and it is truth and no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

I may, perhaps, have gone to almost too great a length in unfolding this subject, but I do so feel its practical importance, and I do so earnestly desire to clear the minds of my young friends on this subject, (if I may be made instrumental for the purpose) knowing as I do, the Holy Scriptures to be of such unutterable importance to them. May we ever reverence and diligently use them. They deal in general principles with regard to morals; with regard to conduct, we have general principles unfolded in the Holy Scriptures. Now how are we to apply those general principles to every act of our lives, to every circumstance of each passing hour? I say there is an infallible inward guide. I say there is not a man amongst us who does not hear a voice behind him, saying, "This is the way, walk thou in it." Oh, the importance of obeying this voice. Oh! the importance of being found practically faithful to the light of the Spirit of Christ, shining in our consciences; "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God, and the

Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are his children, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ;" and may it be so with every one's soul in this assembly!

When our early friends arose, it was a time marked by great formality in the professing church of Christ, and there was far too little attention among christian professors in general, to the vital, inward work, and immediate guidance of the Lord's Spirit; and George Fox and his brethren, appear to have been remarkably raised up in that day, to testify of this inward work, to point out those passages of scripture, and to shew that under the gospel dispensation, we are not to depend on the teaching of our fellow men, but are to come under the immediate teaching of Jesus Christ himself by his Spirit, according to the ancient prophecy, "that every man shall sit under his own fig tree, and under his own vine, and none shall make him afraid." "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children;" and they said, here is a practical principle which will lead men out of all that is untrue, and all

that is unholy, and all that is inconsistent with the true christian character, and will bring them into the genuine purity and simplicity of the christian character, in point both of worship and of conduct; here there is an infallible guide; here there is a heavenly light; there is not one among you who can plead ignorance. They would address themselves to thousands of persons, and so follow the light of the Spirit of Christ, which shines in all our consciences; and the Lord bring you out of all that is evil, and into all that is good; and by following this blessed principle, by insisting upon its plain scripture doctrine, they soon were led to discard the principle of expediency; they found that this infallible inward guide would make no compromise; they found it was not bound to what people call expediency; they found that it must have its own way; that it came from God, and led to God, and therefore they were constrained by following this principle, to adopt a straight line which separated them from those practices of worship, or of conduct, which they saw to be inconsistent with the revealed will of their heavenly Father, made known in their hearts

by his Spirit; made known in legible characters in the pages of scripture. I also said, the two things went together and corresponded, as a man's face corresponds with the shadow of it in a glass. They did not set up one against the other; I hope we never shall. No, the two together are one combined effulgence of pure light, from the only inexhaustible fountain of all that is holy, and all that is true.

Then how did they apply it to the subject of worship? I shall now endeavour shortly to show, what it led them into with regard to worship, and what it led them into with regard to conduct. And first, with regard to worship, they found it written in scripture, that "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth;" and here was a doctrine which did indeed coincide with the immediate dictates of that infallible guide. They applied this doctrine to their own worship; they said, it is a very awful and solemn thing, for persons to gather together under the profession of public worship to a living God. We are poor, corrupt, sinful creatures; we dare not set about this duty in dependence



on our own wisdom, and our own reason ; we dare not adopt the form of words, which may or may not be applicable to the state of our minds ; we dare not publicly chaunt hymns in worship, which probably may describe a state of mind, quite different from that of those persons who use the words. Neither dare we use extempore addresses, or prayers invented by ourselves ; prepared beforehand or invented in our own strength : public worship is too solemn a thing to allow of this. What can we do then ? What does plain truth require of us under these circumstances ? We must sit down in reverent silence, waiting upon the Lord ; and when he calls forth the vocal prayer, when he suggests the good preaching, let it come from whatever quarter it may, man or woman, let it come under the power of the Lord's anointing, and in the blessed liberty of his own spirit. And thus they were accustomed to gather together in reverent silence ; and there was to be felt in their meetings the prevalence of divine light, and they went forth and preached, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the demonstration of the Spirit, and of power, according to the



manner in which it was bestowed upon them.

Now, one word or two on inspiration; it is very important to hold right views on this subject. We know that the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, were endued with a wonderfully exalted measure of inspiration, and the direct, divine authority of that which they said, and that which they wrote, was proved by their miraculous works. Now, there may be different degrees of the same inspiration, the same immediate inspiration, in proportion to the needs of the church of Christ in different ages; still the same thing. The most wonderful effusions of that power was necessary, to enable the apostles to write those Holy Scriptures which are now in our hands. A far lower degree of the very same influence, and applied to the mind in the same manner, is necessary now to enable the Lord's servants, rightly to apply those things which the apostles have written; still it is the same principle, it is the same work applied in different manners, according to the needs of the church of Christ in different ages. May we always hold to this principle; may it ever be understood among us, that no ministry is allowed in a

solemn meeting, for solemn worship, but that which flows from the immediate influence of the Lord's anointing : and it is that, and that alone, which can enable the preacher rightly to unfold the doctrines of scripture and apply them to the state then present, of the persons who are gathered together on every occasion.

This mode of public worship into which the early Friends were led, in obedience, as they believed, to the manifestation of the Spirit, perfectly agrees with the only description which we find in the New Testament, of the public worship of the primitive christians. You will find that description in the 14th chapter of the 1st Epistle to the Corinthians. There was no occupant of the pulpit, to whom the ministry was confined. It was congregational, and all to whom the word was given, were constrained to speak that word in their place, giving way one to another ; having a due respect one to another ; and this was what the apostle calls "prophecy." That is what we should call "ministry," for he says, that prophecy was intended for edification, and exhortation, and comfort ; spoken under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, and

when this immediate influence was withdrawn, and when any of those gifted persons were called into the exercise of those gifts, what must have been the consequence? It must inevitably have been a state of silence, and there is no basis upon which the immediate gifts of the Holy Spirit, can be exercised in an orderly manner, in the very nature of things, but the basis of silence. And how beautifully, my friends, is the propriety of silence adverted to, in that magnificent passage of the prophet Isaiah, "Let all the islands keep silence before the Lord, and let the people renew their strength." Let them draw near, and then let them speak. Let us draw near unto judgment. And now I would just observe, that in those primitive days, the gift of prophecy or of exhortation, edification, and comfort, by the words of living ministry, was not restricted to the stronger sex; men and women arose in their churches, and spoke in prophecy and in preaching, under the immediate influence of the Spirit; and this agrees with the prophecy of Joel, in 2nd chapter, "I will pour forth my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your

young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And also upon the servants and handmaids, in those days will I pour out my spirit, and they shall prophesy." And on the day of Pentecost, when there were one hundred and twenty persons gathered together, the Holy Spirit was poured on them all, and they spake with tongues and prophesied. Now that was one of those miracles, which, I apprehend, was immediately connected with the great work of establishing christianity in the world; it was a directly miraculous gift; but the prophesying, that is to say the preaching for exhortation, for edification, and for comfort, under the same immediate influence, was not a gift directly miraculous in its nature, but was evidently intended for the benefit of the church of our Lord Jesus. The apostle Peter expressly says, "The promise of the Holy Spirit, is unto you and unto your children, and to as many as are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." Again, it was said by our Saviour, that the Spirit should abide with them for ever, for the work of grace, and the imparting of those gifts which are necessary for the maintenance and enlargement



the church in all ages. The Holy Spirit abides with the church for ever; and whatever is classed under these heads, belongs to the privilege of christian believers at all times, and in any place; and may we all of us reverently depend upon this influence; may we know more and more of the effusion of the true gifts of the Spirit on the church of Christ; not looking to anything worldly; not looking to anything of an inconsistent nature, but looking to that which is for edification, for exhortation and for comfort.

One operation of this gift is, that it lays open the state of the hearers. The apostle says, "If a man prophesy, and one comes in who is an unbeliever, he is discerned of all; (detected of all, is the meaning of it) the secrets of his heart are made manifest, and so falling down on the ground, he acknowledges that God is in you of a truth." And this is one of those operations of the gift of true and living ministry, which belongs to its very nature; and I would venture to assert, that we are still furnished with abundant evidence within our own bosoms; and may it be so more and more.



It is said in that same chapter, "Let the women keep silence in the churches, and if they would know anything, let them ask their husbands at home." This refers not to the occurrence of praying and prophecy, as the best commentators shew. Grose, Locke, Benson, and others, severally allowed, that it refers to other points which were common in the church of Corinth at that time, and which had been borrowed from the Jewish synagogues, of interrupting the preacher by questions: and the women of that time at Corinth, had fallen into that habit. They interrupted the preacher by questions; and the apostle commands them not to speak in the church, but to wait till they came home, and make the inquiry of their husbands. So that that entirely removes that difficulty, and I think there is not the smallest created doubt on the subject.

These are the views which Friends were led to entertain of the nature and operation of the christian ministry, in connection with silent worship. The ministry then, must come immediately from the fountain of the Lord's wisdom. It is as free as the air we breathe.

Can we buy the winds of heaven? Can we make contracts for the air that we breathe? We know we cannot. Can we make contracts of the gifts of the Spirit? Impossible. "Freely ye have received, freely give." This is the root and ground, friends, of our objection to the payment of tithes, and other ecclesiastical demands. We dare not pay the ministers of other congregations; we dare not pull down with one hand what we are building up with another; we do not take up these things on political grounds. Oh! my young friends, may all of you shun politics, for they are dangerous, and sap the very life of religion; but keep to your spiritual principles, and here the early Friends found that there was only one straight line for them to pursue. It might have saved them a great deal of trouble to pay their tithes, but they dared not touch the unclean thing; they dared not do anything that contradicted the principle, "Freely ye have received, freely give;" and therefore they said, we must be passive, we can do nothing; we obey the law actively and cheerfully when we can do it with a safe conscience towards God; we know it is our duty; when we can-

not, we will be passive; we do not fight against it; we do not wrestle against it by vain means; we have nothing to do but to sit down and be passive, and suffer the law to take its course, and thereby we bear plain and most conspicuous testimony to the freedom and purity of the gospel dispensation. But although we dare not make contracts for that which is free in its very nature, which is contradictory to the principles of the New Testament, we are fully aware that while our ministers are engaged in actual service, leaving their families, their homes, and their business, the labourer is worthy of his meat. And some of us can testify that an abundant supply of all their needs, in all circumstances, is never denied them. We gladly and joyfully bestow upon them. And so you see how one thing is balanced by another; we are not for anything unreasonable; we are not for high and lofty things, we want no airy speculations; we only want plain, New Testament, scriptural, original, primitive truth. That is all we want, and may we have it, and have it ever.

Well, these were the views which the early Friends took on the subject of worship, and

not only so, but they found themselves restricted. (I hope my young friends are not fatigued, I shall endeavour to concentrate my remarks, but I shall have no other opportunity to continue this subject.) They saw another thing in the New Testament; that the gospel dispensation was purely spiritual in its nature, and that the whole system of the ceremonial law was abolished by the death of Christ. The law and the worship of Moses, was a system of shadows and types: the worship under the gospel dispensation, is a system of realities, of substance; it is spiritual in its very nature. They believed that all things purely ceremonial in religion and the worship of God, were for ever and at once abolished by the death, the propitiatory death of Jesus Christ. They knew that various ceremonies were practised for a time in the church; many Jewish practices continued for a time; for our Lord dealt gently with his disciples, and did not impose upon them any sudden or violent changes; he only put them in possession of principles of which those changes would be the ultimate result, and on this ground friends were led to assert, and they



still do assert, that the only baptism permanently belonging to the gospel dispensation, is the baptism of the spirit; and they pointed to various passages by which their doctrine was enforced and confirmed; for example by the apostle Peter, when speaking of the Antediluvians, and of their being saved by water, he says, "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth now save us," (and here I should say that in the Greek it is not the "Like figure," but the "Antitype," or that which corresponds to it, is the proper meaning), "Doth now save us, even baptism." What is it? What is it not? Not the putting away the filth of the flesh; what is it but the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, by the spiritual power of the risen and glorified Jesus? This is what Friends held to be the only true christian baptism, and the apostle Paul speaks plainly of the same baptism, for he says "There is one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." Now I know of nothing fairer than allowing a man to be an interpreter of himself; and what says he elsewhere? "By one spirit we are baptized into one body:" therefore we must



conclude that the only baptism which he recognized, was the baptism of the spirit. Turn again to the epistle to the Corinthians, and there he says, "I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any man should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas, beside I know not whether I baptized any other; for Christ sent me not to baptize." There is a direct assertion. Now friends, turn to that passage in Matthew, where our Saviour before he left this earth, commanded his disciples to go and make disciples of all nations, (that is the meaning of the words,) baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This command was addressed to the apostles. Was Paul a partaker of the apostolic mission or not? Undoubtedly he was. If baptism in water was the meaning of this command, is it possible that Paul should say that he was sent not to baptize but to preach the gospel, not in the enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the demonstration of the spirit, and of power? And we believe that when the gospel is preached in the demonstration of the spirit

and of power, it is made the blessed means of truly baptizing the people into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Now we are well aware that the apostles were accustomed to water baptism, as they were to many other Jewish practices; and some persons have supposed that they practised it in consequence of this command; but the apostle contradicts that, and a proof that they did not do it in consequence of this command, is found in this, that they were accustomed to use this rite long before the command was issued, as we find in the 3rd and 4th chapters of John's gospel. It was in fact, a common Jewish practice, used from time immemorial almost; at any rate, from the first covenant of the law. They were commanded to wash their clothes as a rite of purification; that is, they were dipped with the whole body, with clothes on, and afterwards when any person was proselyted to the Jewish religion, becoming a Jew instead of a Gentile, when he became a proselyte to the whole system of Judaism, he was baptized invariably, as a matter of course, as is plainly declared by Jewish writers, and described in

all cases ; particularly by Maimonides, one of the most learned Jews. He lived in Spain, in the 12th century, and so learned was he, (his name was Moses,) that the Jews have a common saying, that " From Moses to Moses there is nobody like Moses ;" and in his works, we find a description of the way in which the ancient Jews were accustomed to be baptized. Their practice was to dip under the water, signifying that the person who was baptized, was transferred from one system of faith to another ; the new system being the purer of the two. John therefore baptized, as a matter of course ; he baptized into the faith, and the Messiah to come. There was one step of religion ; the disciples therefore baptized as a matter of course ; there was another step of religion ; they baptized into faith in the Messiah who was already come ; but Jesus himself, our great pattern, whom it is always safe to follow, though he submitted to the baptism of John, because he lived under the law, yet as the instituter and divine founder of a new religion, he baptized not ; for when the baptism of the disciples of Jesus was spoken of, the apostle expressly declared,

“Howbeit Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.” Now, let no man pretend to say that we deny baptism. I believe there is no society in the world, that more deeply feels its importance; but what is the baptism? Let us hear what it is in the words of the highest authority, the words of the Baptist himself: “I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost;” and friends remember, oh! remember, that you never can be living members of the church of Christ, unless you are inwardly baptized by the Holy Ghost; the washing of regeneration in the receiving of the Holy Ghost: and while christians are bound to exercise all charity one towards another, in reference to the outward rite; while I have no desire to interfere with the religious opinions of any man living, I am sure of one thing, that it is the duty of every christian minister, to lay all stress upon the baptism which alone can save; even on the baptism of Christ himself, which is with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

Then a few sentences on the subject of the Lord's supper. Do we deny the Lord's supper? No friends, we rejoice in the Lord's supper. We turn to the 6th chapter of John's gospel, and there we find the subject elucidated; there we find, "Except ye eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, ye have no life;" and I would ask is this a ceremony? Is this an outward observance? We are sure it is not, for our Lord in explaining it, says "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words which I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are truth." Now it is important that we should understand this passage; it is a figurative passage, and the figure lies not in the flesh and blood, but in the eating and drinking; we eat and drink the flesh and blood of Christ, when we imbibe Christ crucified as our only Saviour, and our only hope of glory, by a living faith; when we place our soul's reliance, on the actual flesh and blood of Christ, on the body which was broken, and on that blood which was shed for us. That I apprehend, to be the true meaning of the passage; and by that faith we are brought into possession of



the Holy Spirit, which rises within us unto life everlasting and is our very life. May we all eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, and then we shall be partakers of the true, needful, and essential supper of the Lord.

Now with regard to the practice of commemorating the death of Christ, which prevailed among the early christians ; when our Saviour said, " This do in remembrance of me," when he handed around the cup and brake the bread, this took place at a meal ; they actually drank the wine and eat the bread for the nourishment of their bodies, and when the early christians met together from house to house, on usual occasions, and brake their bread in one another's company, in the sweet fellowship of the gospel, and for the refreshment of their bodies, they reverently called to mind the body that was broken, and the blood that was shed for them. Here was no ceremony in worship ; here was no practice of the Jewish observance, as a type in worship. It was indeed a Jewish practice, because they were accustomed so to break their bread and drink their wine, but friends, it was a very

different thing in its nature, from what has since taken place. They gathered together at their social meals, and afterwards at what they called their love feasts, and while they refreshed their bodies, they called Christ to their remembrance; and I hope that we shall never be found in the practice of any formal observance of any description. But of one thing, I feel quite confident; that we cannot too often remember the body that was broken, and the blood that was shed for us, and I wish we may always be reminded of them, by the very food that we eat. I wish my dear young friends when they are partaking of the natural refreshment of their bodies, were more often reminded of that spiritual food which is needful for the soul. Oh! it is precious to be so reminded; and I cannot avoid giving the words of one of our friends, who said, that she never took her meals on any occasion, without secretly calling to mind the body that was broken, and the blood that was shed for her. I feel full unity with such a spirit. Here there was nothing in the form, but when, in the course of the second century, this simple practice which prevailed among the early christians,

and of which Pliny makes mention about the end of the first century, of their passing often a social supper, or meal together; in the course of the second century, it was changed, it was transferred to their public worship, and became what it is now—a purely ceremonial ordinance; not the refreshment of their bodies, not the social meal, not the christian fellowship, as on former occasions, but a type, a shadow, a ceremony in worship, and as we view it, a plain recurrence to the principles of the worship of the old law, which was in the shadow, in the type, in the figure, and not in the reality and in the substance.

While therefore, we do not in the least degree condemn our christian neighbours, let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. We are deeply convinced that we should weaken the foundation of true spiritual worship, by recurring to any ceremonial observations or rite of any kind whatever. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." Now the word truth, means reality there; not in the shadow; not in the type; not in the figure, but in the actual reality and the substance of

the thing. This is the meaning of the words, and there is the broad principle on which we stand, and I hope shall stand stedfastly ; for it is a principle open, clear, obvious, scriptural ; founded on Jesus Christ, and on him crucified.

Such are the views which Friends entertain on the subject of worship, and now, shortly, with regard to conduct. They dared not abolish their public worship, theirs was a straight line that could not give way to the principle of expediency, and when in consequence of the terrors of the law, the dissenters of that day met only in private places, where they were hidden and protected from the arm of the law, Friends said, No ; it is our duty to worship God, and we must go straight forward in the work ; though we may be trampled down by the soldiery, or driven to prison by the magistrates, we will bear the plainest testimony, and take all the consequences. And the consequence was, that they were led in multitudes to prison, and deep were their sufferings, on this and on other accounts, but the joy of the Lord was their portion, and in the depths of the noisome prison house, were



often heard in that day, songs of living melody, and praise in the honor, and for the glory of him who bought them with his blood. Oh! friends, how should we stand a day like this? How would my young friends stand it? I give them the credit of believing that most of them, would stand it well. I believe that they know their principles too well to turn their backs upon them, and I hope what has passed to night may still further confirm their views. A day of trouble may probably come. Oh! that they may be stedfast. I wish that the description which is given of George Fox, by Thomas Clissoll, may be applicable to them. He says, he was vigilant in the truth, bold in asserting it, patient in suffering for it, unwearied in bearing to it glad testimony, and unchangeable as to the truth. There is one point of conduct; now take another. They refused to swear; the world said it was expedient to swear, and that it was quite necessary for the purposes of justice. The Friends said, No, verily, the law of God forbids it; we have a shepherd; he commands us not to swear at all; the words are clear, "I say unto you swear not at all." In vain was every sophis-



tical argument in their view, when weighed against those scriptural words ; in vain was it said, that men might swear in courts of justice, and on no other occasion ; it was the principle of the old law, that the Jew should not forswear himself in their courts of justice, " But I say unto you swear not at all." Therefore, Friends acted upon plain principles, and in consequence of their refusal to swear, they were subjected again and again, to the most severe sufferings, because they found themselves constrained by the love of Christ, to go in the straight line, and deny nothing. Then again, they dared not fight ; they not only objected to offensive warfare, but likewise to defensive warfare ; at least they objected to both, and they said that the whole question was settled in three words, " Love your enemies." They said, it was impossible that any man should love his enemy, and shoot him at the same moment. They said that Christ their Saviour, their Lord, had settled the question ; therefore it was not for them to consider whether it was expedient, or whether the world called it necessary ; they followed those words, " Love your enemies," and

they were led to that love by the immediate guidance and government of the Lord's anointing; the law was written in their hearts, and they dared not resist this combined influence and authority; the only thing that they could do was to adopt the lamb-like character of the Lord who bought them, and to be willing to return good for evil and suffer patiently.

Then one more point of a practical nature. They found themselves restricted by the same unwearied workings of the Spirit, from using the common complimentary forms of language; they saw that it was inconsistent with christian simplicity and christian integrity; inconsistent with the example of Christ and of his apostles, and inconsistent with the language of scripture itself; and therefore they dared not to do it; and in consequence of their using the "*thee*" and "*thou*" instead of a plural, and abstaining from all complimentary formalities, which are familiar to us all, they were often exposed to very severe sufferings, in consequence of their faithfulness to this smaller doctrine. They found the anointing of the Lord makes no compromise;

that it must have full sway; the Spirit of the Lord brings out the spirit of man. And again, in their attire, they dared not adorn themselves with gold, embroidery of lace, and the putting on of splendid apparel, as described by the apostle. No, the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, was the only ornament which they allowed, the only ornament which the New Testament allowed. They dared not put on those outward ornaments which but indulge personal vanity, and the follies of the world; and do not become true christian simplicity and lowliness. By keeping to this principle, they soon became singular in their appearance; they did not adopt the custom for singularity, that was not their object; they obeyed christian simplicity both in tongue and in dress; and as fashions changed from time to time, they became singular. They did not dare to adopt the fashions of the world, which was demanded of them.

Now all these things rest upon a plain New Testament ground; and my dear young friends, I do beseech you as an unworthy elder brother, not to forsake the christian testimonies in these particulars; for I can say from long and

extensive observation, that they are greatly blessed to every young person, and that when they throw off any of its restrictions in tongue or dress, it almost invariably happens that it is an inlet to the world and to sin. We are to keep out of the way of temptation ; to keep under the restrictions of the cross ; and I will venture to say, that there is not a young man in this assembly, who, consistently with the plain dress and tongue, would dare to take his plain coat, and his *thees* and *thous* into the haunts of worldly assemblies ; therefore it is an important ground. I intreat you not to disregard these things ; our early Friends suffered deeply on account of these things, and their line was a line of straightforward duty, under the guidance and government of the Lord's anointing. I do not want to exalt them as patterns ; I hold out no pattern to any man, but our Lord Jesus Christ : I hold out no system of doctrines or precepts, but those of the Holy Scriptures ; here is the ground on which I stand, and I do not want vainly to exalt the early Friends. I know that they had infirmities like other men, and I know that some of them were perhaps, in

some degree, too prone to defend the distinction which rested on a name, at that remarkable day ; but I do say that the goodness of the tree, is amply proved by the goodness of the fruit : I do say, that those principles were plain christian principles ; that they are the principles of the New Testament itself, and nothing more or less than a consistent, harmonious, and well established view of the true, spiritual, and comprehensive glorious gospel dispensation ; and were I to refer any of you to a book which should contain a full development of our religious principles ; the book should be the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; and my firm belief is, that the more my beloved young friends are enabled to search the New Testament, and to enter into its spirit and meaning, under the guidance of the Lord's Spirit, which giveth all faith ; and the more they endeavour in all their conduct and conversation, to obey their inward teacher, and to follow the light of the Spirit of Christ in their own hearts, the more they will become confirmed in these religious principles in which they were educated ; the more they

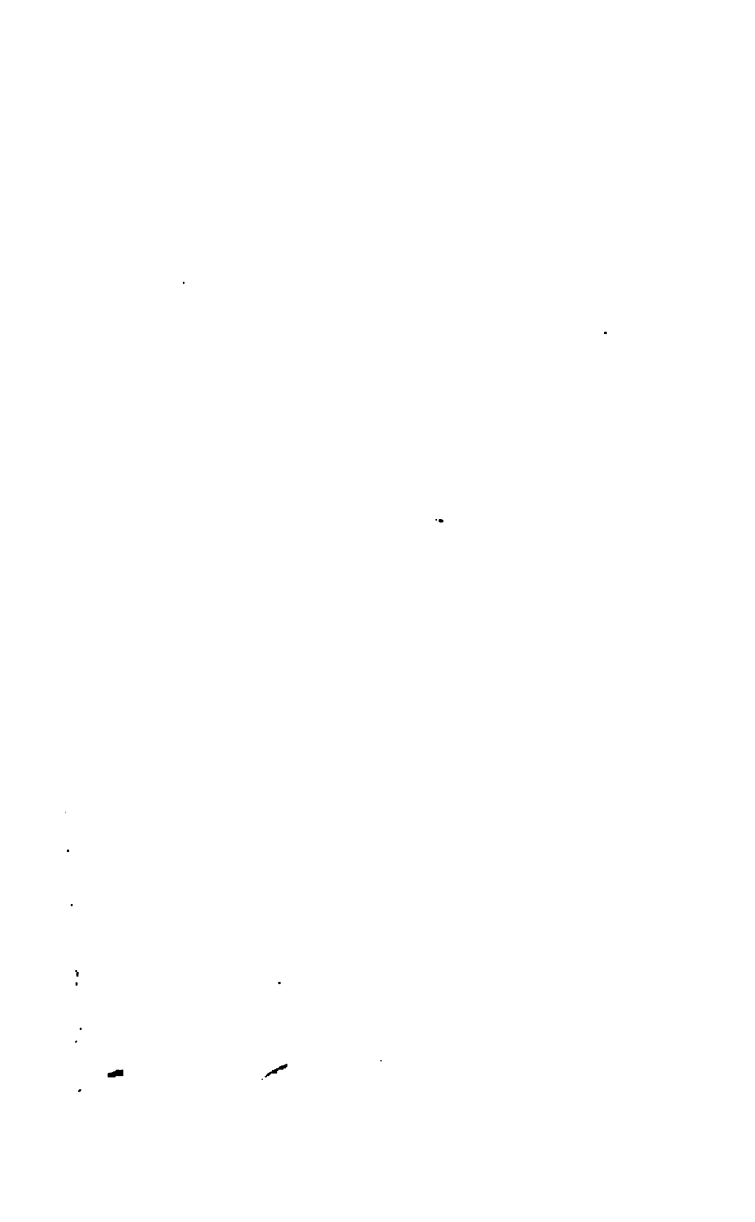


will cleave in their spirits to the law and to the testimony as they have been always held among us. Again, I would observe that I have no sectarian views. I think nothing of any name under heaven, as a name to which we are to attach our religious faith, but the name of Jesus. I have no unity with those who would be baptized into the name of Paul, into the name of Apollos, or into the name of Cephas; no, there is but one truth, there is but one church, even the universal church of our Lord Jesus Christ; and may this church be awakened from her slumbers, may she arise and shake herself from the dust, may she array herself in her beautiful garments, may she be clothed with the sun, and may the inferior light of the moon of mere human reason and speculation, be under her feet, and may she be strong and glorious in her law, until the glory of God shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea.

Perhaps we cannot separate more comfortably than under the solemn feelings which are now created. I trust that fervent love one towards another pervades amongst us, and that love for the cause of truth will more

and more distinguish us as individuals, and as a body. I bid all my beloved young friends farewell in the Lord Jesus Christ, and may we remember one another; may you remember me for good when you draw near to the throne of grace; may we intercede one for another, in the name of Jesus. The Lord be with you, and prosper you in all your ways. Farewell!

[REDACTED]



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